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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE conversations between French and British Ministers have shown, according to the rather meagre official communiqué, that the united front is still firm. On most of the specific matters under discussion, the role of this front appears to be mainly that of a spectator—in Spain, in the Far East, in Central Europe. That is the deplorable and natural result of the past policies of the democratic Powers. On the colonial question there seems to have been some more purposeful talk and it is satisfactory to know that the French and British Governments see eye to eye in the matter. They agree that it cannot be considered in isolation; other countries are also involved—which is in some quarters believed to point to a plan for providing Germany with a vast new colony including Belgian and Portuguese territory as well as the Cameroons now under British and French mandate. It is clear that if Germany is to get the colonies she demands, she must be asked to give, not *quid pro quo* to us and France, but her adherence to a settlement offering some security to the whole world. There, for the present, we stick; "Germany's colonial claims," it is declared in Berlin, "cannot be made the subject of bargaining." Why not—if German intentions are as honest and as peaceful as Herr Hitler so constantly asserts?

Japan Marches On

The Japanese advance on Nanking is proceeding steadily, as we write. Kiangyin and its forts have fallen, as also have Changchow and Kwangteh—and that means the capture of China's "second Hindenburg line." It is still uncertain whether Nanking will be defended, and, if it is, for how long the defence will be able to hold out. Meanwhile, the Japanese Government are making hay while the sun shines. They have got Italy's recognition of Manchukuo, and they themselves have recognised General Franco's Government in Spain. Their threats to the rights and interests of the foreign Powers in China have become more serious and more definite. There are dangerous military activities in the near neighbourhood of Hong Kong, whilst in Shanghai Japanese hands are already closing on the Customs service, to the accompaniment of diplomatic protests by American and British and French ambassadors in Tokio. The "official spokesman" blandly declares that Japan cannot allow the Customs revenues to be used by the Chinese for military purposes, and suggests that Japanese control of these revenues may

be only temporary. It may be—or it may not! The significance of this action, for China and for the Western Powers themselves, is explained in an article on a later page.

Presidential Perplexities

Mr. Roosevelt still appears to believe that he can hold a position midway between surrendering to Big Business and reversing the slump by a fresh dose of New Deal expenditure. His Housing Message to Congress (analysed on our City page) is based on the assumption that private enterprise alone can recreate prosperity; and his latest insistence on the necessity of a balanced budget, coupled with the announcement that Federal expenditure on roads will be drastically reduced, looks almost as if he had been reading the recommendations of the British May Committee of 1931. On the other hand, he is apparently by no means in the mood to call off the New Dealers in the Securities and Exchange Commission or to give Wall Street a free hand to put the old financial racket on its legs again; he has given no definite pledge that the taxes on capital profits and undistributed earnings will be repealed; and his threat to extend Federal production and distribution of electric power remains in reserve if the private utility companies fail eventually to agree on a revision of their charges on terms "reasonable and fair in common law." He is clearly moving some way to the Right, in the sense that he seems definitely to have renounced any idea of stimulating industry by "pump-priming" from the Federal exchequer, and is obviously anxious to come to terms with finance capital. Wall Street was pleased by his suggestion that labour costs in the building industry must be reduced; but if deflation is to be the Government's chief contribution towards re-starting the wheels, the depression seems likely to be prolonged.

The Cagoulards

Lawyers, police, politicians, pressmen, are all still hard at work on the task of unravelling the Cagoulard plot. Colonel de la Rocque's libel action (or actions, for there are 17 of them against 6 Paris newspapers) is engaging the courts; and Duke Pozzo di Borgo, now under arrest, continues his blackguarding of the Colonel, while making no attempt to deny his own part in the conspiracy. The police have unearthed some more arms and ammunition, and have also discovered and deciphered the Cagoulards' oath, which runs: "I swear fidelity, discretion and obedience to the organisation. Any breach of the regulations is punishable by death." It is difficult as yet to be sure about the exact magnitude of the plot. But it seems pretty clear that, after all allowance for romantic and alarmist exaggeration, there were enough desperate men in it preparing for, and capable of, making serious trouble, if not a first-class revolution.

Dr. Schacht is Replaced

Dr. Funk, a reliable Nazi party man and an old antagonist of Dr. Schacht's, has succeeded the latter as German Minister of Economic Affairs; and Dr. Schacht, while remaining nominally Governor of the Reichsbank, has at last compelled the Führer to recognise his abdication from the general direction of German economic policy. Honours accompany Dr. Schacht in his retirement. He is made a Cabinet Minister without portfolio, which means little, for in effect the Cabinet system hardly exists. In return, Dr. Schacht has addressed to his former subordinates a retiring message which ends up with the indispensable "Heil, Hitler!" but scarcely makes a secret of its author's disapproval of the more recent developments of German *Autarkie*. German industrialists are known to be seriously perturbed at Dr. Schacht's withdrawal, and at the complete subordination of their interests to General Goering's desire for war-time self-sufficiency; and they are reported to have made strong representations against Dr. Funk's appointment. For the moment, however, their protests are not likely to be of effect. Serious as the situation is becoming in respect of the supply of raw materials, Goering will hardly modify his plans so long as he can continue to buy armament materials merely at the cost of depriving German consumers of imported goods. Germany can carry on along the existing lines for some time yet—albeit with increasing discomfort for the mass of the people. Her representatives have been trying to ease the situation by getting economic concessions from the United States; but Mr. Hull stands pat on the most-favoured nation clause, which is irreconcilable with Germany's practice of barter agreements.

Air Raid Precautions

The Air Raid Precautions Bill has been pushed through Committee without amendment—save for the promise by the Government that in specially poor districts, where householders cannot afford to buy fire-fighting appliances of the prescribed kind, consideration will be given to the provision of "some kind of fire-fighting apparatus" at the Air Wardens' posts. Under criticism, however, the make-believe nature of the Bill has become painfully apparent. Asked to state what would occur to improvised gas-proof rooms whose windows had been blown in (as would almost certainly happen) by a preliminary high-explosive bombardment, all that Mr. Lloyd could suggest was that glass could be strengthened by pasting on it "strips of ordinary paper." The question of the evacuation of civilians from crowded, vulnerable centres was said to be "very much in the mind" of the Home Office, but Sir Samuel Hoare offered scant hopes of any tangible scheme emerging. Expert opinion in Germany, he said, had reached the conclusion that evacuation of large cities is impracticable. That may be so; but there would certainly be a disorderly *sauve qui peut* in the event of air attack. Critics of the Bill who rightly urged that, in default of evacuation, the only effective way to minimise loss of life is to establish a comprehensive system of public underground shelters got no satisfaction from the Government. The money for such methods of defending civilians will not be forthcoming; and Mr. Lloyd gave a warning against the danger of taking refuge in metropolitan Tubes, whose exits could easily be destroyed by a direct hit and whose tunnels would be liable to flooding. The Bill, in short, remains a sham, whose intention is to lull the public into a false sense of security—until the deluge.

The Air Inquiry

In the matter of the composition of the Committee of Inquiry into civil aviation, Parliament has displayed a

commendable spirit of independence. The selection of a committee composed of two civil servants, with Lord Cadman as chairman, gave little promise of fearless or searching investigation; and it was distinctly undesirable that the examination of charges made in the House by members of the legislature should be delegated to salaried officers of the executive. The Prime Minister has wisely bowed before the storm. The two civil servants on the committee are dropped and are replaced by Sir Frederick Marquis, an able organiser of retail distribution, Mr. T. Harrison Hughes of the Harrison shipping line, and Mr. J. W. Bowen, late general secretary of the Union of Post Office Workers. As revised, the committee is a much more reassuring body. Its proceedings will be *in camera*, and it has no formal terms of reference. The Under-Secretary for Air, however, has explained that though the committee is not to reopen questions already closed by the Government—*e.g.*, the complete divorce of civil aviation from the Air Ministry—it will be free to investigate the whole of the charges of inefficiency levied by Mr. Perkins and other M.P.s against Imperial Airways and will be invited to express its opinion on the adequacy of the company's machinery for dealing with its staff and their grievances. The critics' case against the company will now, we trust, have a full and impartial examination.

The Films Bill

The progress of the Films Bill through Parliament bids fair to be slow. A new clause tabled by the President of the Board of Trade has been added in Committee establishing an Advisory Films Council of 21 persons, representing partly the industry and partly the cinema-going public, to watch the future operation of the Act and initiate recommendations to the Board of Trade in connection with any problems which may arise. Whether such an unwieldy assembly of discordant interests will function effectively, or to any more purpose than the existing Advisory Committee, seems doubtful; but, since the Council is not to have any of the powers which the Moyne Report recommended should be given to a statutory Films Commission, the new Clause is not of major importance. Much more important is the proposal, sponsored by the film producers' group in the F.B.I., that no films entered for renters' quota should be allowed to count for exhibitors' quota. The effect of this would be to give British film producers an absolute monopoly in a stated proportion of every programme and to force American renters to spend over a million a year in buying British films which would have practically no chance of being sold or shown. The plan represents an extreme version of protectionism which would inflict on audiences in this country British films made without regard for quality, and would kill any hopes of reciprocity with America in the matter of showings.

More Workers to be Insured

The process of extending unemployment insurance to additional groups of workers goes on steadily. Under the latest proposals the scheme will be revised so as to include domestic workers employed in institutions, as well as hotel and restaurant workers. It was an obvious anomaly that, whereas workers in proprietary clubs and institutions were insured, persons doing exactly the same work in non-proprietary institutions were not, and that numerous other classes of workers should be outside the scope of the Act simply because they were in the employment of "non-profit-making" bodies. The Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee is slowly approaching the point at which it will recommend the application of the insurance system to the entire body of workers in domestic service. But it has again stopped a long way short of this; and we notice that the public schools and universities have been influential enough to secure the exemption of their domestic staffs from the latest extension of the insurance system—on what logical ground we cannot guess. It is certainly right, now that unemployment insurance has been spread so wide, to make it practically universal. But, as the system approaches universality, there is the less reason for financing it by special levies on the employers and workers concerned, and the more for meeting the cost out of the general proceeds of taxation. Unemployment insurance has long ceased to be insurance in any real sense. As for the proposal that the Unemployment Insurance Fund should be allowed to use its surplus to pay off debts bearing a high rate of interest, this is obviously sensible, if those debts are to be paid at all. But in our view it would be much more reasonable to wipe them off, and use the Fund's accumulating surpluses for the provision of more adequate benefits.

The Cost of Living

In the summer of 1933 the cost of living was about 36 per cent. above the pre-war level. In the corresponding months of 1937 it was 52 per cent., and by the current estimate it is now 60 per cent. above that level. These increases are, of course, the combined consequence of a number of different forces—the recovery in the world prices of new foodstuffs and other primary products, the development of British protectionism and of State-encouraged price-maintenance arrangements among British producers, and the rearmament programme have all helped to raise current prices to a high level. As a result, the advantages in real wages secured during the depression have been largely wiped out, and the existing scales of unemployment benefit and relief have become much more inadequate than they were even two or three years ago. Naturally, then, the food prices campaign recently launched by the Labour Party and the Trade Unions is getting a wide response; for more and more housewives have been finding it hard to make ends meet. The Government has already been driven to instruct its relief agencies to make modifications, where they are requisite in individual cases, in the scales of relief allowed; but it is opposing any general readjustment of scales, partly on "economy" grounds, but also partly because of the great difficulty of foretelling future price-trends in view of the marked recession now going on in the United States. It is quite possible that, just as the Labour campaign reaches its height, the cost of living will begin again to fall. But that does not make the campaign unnecessary. However desirable it may be to avoid any reduction of wholesale commodity prices, there is ample scope for economies in the costs of distributing such things as milk, bread, coal and fruit to the consumer.

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BUT THERE IS SPAIN

THE broad effect, we take it, of this week's talks in London is that the British and French Governments may declare their willingness to give friendly consideration to Germany's colonial claims, if she on her side will make her contribution to European peace. If the Western Powers ever reach the stage of detailed negotiations with Berlin through the door that Lord Halifax opened, the nature of this contribution will have to be defined. No doubt it will include acceptance of a general limitation of armaments, and perhaps of an air pact. In principle this is sound; Powers that consent to limit or, better still, to reduce their armaments, do in some degree lessen their capacity for aggression. The acceptance of some armament agreement should certainly be one of the conditions in any general settlement involving concessions about colonies or raw materials. But there is an even more immediate question. Germany is not merely arming to expand her sphere of influence, by the bloodless pressure of her visible, measurable force, as Hitler explained in his Augsburg speech; she is actually fighting, in company with Italy, to destroy democracy in Spain. By asking the Führer to withdraw, and to bring pressure to bear on the Duce to withdraw, from Spain Great Britain and France may test his will to peace far more promptly and easily than in a long and tangled discussion over armaments.

The Anglo-French attitude is presumably a readiness to make the concessions that political and economic reason dictate, so soon as the attempt to extort them by force comes to an end. There are several ways of wringing concessions of this kind from peace-loving democracies. Hitler is much too wise to send his cruisers to African ports, as the Kaiser did, though like the Kaiser he may want a place in the African sun. He bombed Guernica instead. He sends no troops into Czechoslovakia, though a change in its status and constitution may rank high among his objectives. Instead, he sends 10,000 technical troops to Spain. This world of ours, even amid the anarchy of to-day, is still so highly organised that military pressure applied in a sensitive spot may yield results a thousand miles away. For our part, we should stubbornly refuse to treat either of the Dictators as candidates for the blessings that fall to peacemakers until they have actually evacuated their troops from Spain.

"But that," we shall be told, "is the business of the London Neutrality Committee. In this complex world there must be some division of labour. While Lord Halifax (or is it Mr. Eden?) negotiates with Hitler, Lord Plymouth has the matter of Spain well in hand. The machinery of non-intervention runs so smoothly that six weeks have passed since an angry word was spoken at the London Committee." Let us look at this claim. About the moment when MM. Chautemps and Delbos left Paris to talk reconciliation in London a squadron of fourteen German military planes flew south and west across their frontier. Two of them landed in Austria and their pilots gave themselves up at Linz. They had been ordered, they said, to fly to Spain, but having scruples about this kind of warfare, they preferred a life of exile. The remaining twelve carried no scruples in their load, and we must suppose that they duly arrived in Spain. How often does that happen? If not daily, at very brief intervals. No news equally revealing is available about Italian troop movements. The German conscience, it may be, carries a more complex cargo than the Latin. But fragments of news do leak out. It seems to be a fact that big masses of Italian infantry were repatriated after the capture of Gijon. But there is some ground for suspecting that the three divisions despatched with a loud blare of trumpets to Tripoli were actually destined for Spain. Their arrival, some in Malaga, some in Cadiz, has been reported by observers whose accuracy we have no means of checking. It seems then that both Dictators continue to wage war in Spain, while Lord Plymouth guides his Committee. They provide Franco with most of his skilled technical troops, his flying men, his tank crews, his artillery and the organisers of his transport and munition service, together with a large part of his best shock troops. With their aid the long-expected winter offensive, which some expect to be decisive, is now about to begin on the Aragon front and towards Almeria.

And the Neutrality Committee that runs so smoothly? It has not yet so much as appointed the two Commissioners who are to take the preliminary step of discovering how many foreigners are engaged on either side. When they do get to work, it is said, we must allow another two or three months for their investigations. And then? If, as we are told the Foreign Office expects, the coming offensive has destroyed the Republic, it is conceivable that the Italian and German troops, or a great part of them, having finished their job, may then be withdrawn. But if the offensive fails, or achieves only a partial success, does any clear-sighted man really believe that Mussolini and Hitler will abandon their attempt to conquer Spain and leave Franco to his own resources? One is not puzzled, though one may be disgusted, by the conduct of the Foreign Office. It believes that Franco will win; it prepares for that contingency by opening with him what are virtually diplomatic relations; it flatters itself (we think erroneously) that it will be able by a loan and by social influence to buy out the Italians and Germans who gave him his victory. Consequently it stages this parody of non-intervention. Certainly it is doing Franco a service for which he ought to be grateful. Two months have passed since the French announced that their patience was exhausted, and that they would give the Dictators a week but no more to agree to evacuation, failing which they would instantly open the frontiers. That week has passed—eight weeks, indeed, have passed; another eight or twelve weeks will certainly pass, and still the frontier is not opened. The British Foreign Office has, in fact, induced the French to allow Mussolini another winter in which to smash the Republic. If the French have submitted to this patent machination, it is not that they are simpletons. They feel themselves in danger, and the Foreign Office persistently trades on their fear of being left in the lurch.

But why does public opinion in this country endure it? Chiefly for two reasons. The daily press has diverted its attention to China. Events in that country do, indeed, deserve our attention; they are horrifying, they move swiftly and they are making decisions that may shape the whole future of the Far East. It is also

a fact well known to the press that British capital has in China a stake six times as large as its investment in Spain. Our ability to change the course of events is, however, very much less in Asia than it is at our own doors.

The other reason for apathy is an unjustifiable defeatism over the prospects of the Republic. Some friends of Spain have perhaps allowed themselves to be unnecessarily discouraged by Franco's achievement of this year. His German bombers and his Italian infantry enabled him to wipe out the Republic entirely on its northern coasts. If he could do that, is it not merely a question of time till he destroys it in the other half of Spain? This reasoning is plausible but, in our belief, mistaken. The northern provinces had been isolated from the centre and east from the first days of the Civil War. It had never been possible to supply them with planes, tanks and artillery, save in negligible quantities. Worse still, they remained aloof from the slow but irresistible process of evolution that converted the untrained party militias into a disciplined regular army. The Basques showed stubborn courage and the Asturian miners sold their lives recklessly, but they had neither the arms nor the discipline that the main armies of the Republic have now acquired. There are, we admit, grounds for anxiety. Eastern Spain, which always relied on other districts for wheat and meat, is short of food, and stinted in petrol. Franco, thanks to continual reinforcement from Italy and Germany, is somewhat the stronger in the air, while, thanks again to foreign expert help, he holds the command of the sea. But in spite of these disadvantages, the Republic is now making very serviceable aeroplanes of its own and has trained an army capable both by its morale and its technical progress of defending the territory it holds.

But the defence of this beleaguered stronghold of democracy falls to us as well as to the Spaniards. Catalonia alone, with a normal population of two and a half millions, must feed more than a million refugees, and it is only one province among several. The Labour Party and the Co-operative movement are working strenuously to do their part; but to see to it that this gallant nation does not lose its battle for the survival of democracy in Europe is the duty of us all. While every progressive organisation helps to send food, medical aid and clothes to Spain, we may be sure that the Labour Party will keep watch over Franco's attempts to impose a blockade. The Admiralty has, indeed, repudiated his legal right to take such a step. But it has also "warned" British shipping of its danger if it defies this illegal blockade. Those were its tactics when Bilbao was besieged, with consequences that we bitterly remember. Such "warnings" are calculated and must be designed to intimidate owners and insurance brokers.

There ought to be no danger to shipping if the British and French patrols do their duty on the high seas. The Republic can assure the safety of foreign ships over the mere three miles of their own waters that must be traversed in entering the ports of Barcelona or Valencia. The Opposition, Labour and Liberal, can and will, we believe, make such collusive support for Franco unpopular and impossible. Finally, over these Halifax discussions it has its chance. Negotiations with Germany cannot go far without at least the tacit assent of the Opposition. We trust it to resist any concessions to the Dictators while they continue to make war on Spain.

UNSCRAMBLING OTTAWA

WITH loud flourish of trumpets the Governments of Britain and the United States announced simultaneously a fortnight ago that informal and exploratory discussions directed to discovering the basis for an Anglo-American trade agreement had reached a point which enabled formal negotiations to begin. The announcement would presumably not have been made unless both London and Washington felt satisfied that no serious hitch would occur in negotiations on the lines tentatively agreed. That is to say, a pact evidently exists already in substance, subject to modification, it may be, in points of detail which prove particularly obnoxious to this or that vested interest. The news is welcome; even though the pig still discreetly hidden in the diplomatic poke turns out to be a somewhat diminutive porker, it may be presumed that the contemplated agreement will represent a move, however cautious, in the direction of greater freedom of trade. Nevertheless, gratification at this decision on the part of the world's two greatest trading nations to liberalise the terms on which interchanges of each other's goods take place must still be qualified by realisation of two facts. First, under the procedure laid down by the U.S. Act of 1934, four or five months will have to elapse—giving time for the application by injured interests of ample "heat" in the lobbies of Congress—before the President can finally ratify any tariff reductions which he has in mind. Secondly, the nature of Mr. Chamberlain's commitments both to the Dominions and to the interests in this country on which his party's fortunes largely depend suggests that the scope of the agreement may be severely circumscribed. Moreover, the attendant circumstances are not so favourable as they were six months ago. Tariff reductions are always eased by rising prices and boom conditions in industry; but to-day America is in the early stages of a slump, world commodity prices are tumbling, and the industrial outlook even in Britain is dubious, despite the maintenance, so far, of prosperous activity.

Let us examine, in turn, what each side wants to get out of the agreement and what *quid pro quo* it is feasible for each to offer the other. The British Government's demands can be elucidated without difficulty. If employment in this country is to be maintained after the temporary stimulus of the rearmament programme has passed its climax, it is vital to secure ampler export outlets for British manufactures. Under the Hawley-Smoot tariff, four-fifths of our exports of manufactured goods to the United States are subject to tariff duties, and even American commentators* are constrained to admit that the rates of duty are high. In a few categories—notably, tin plate, leather and boots and shoes—the duty is, at most, 30 per cent. *ad valorem* or its specific rate equivalent. But most textiles are charged at rates between 30 and 45 per cent.; linen damasks and silks pay 45 to 60 per cent.; carpets, woollen hosiery and china are dutiable at rates between 60 and 75 per cent.; worsteds pay over 75 per cent.; and a 90 per cent. duty is levied on cotton lace, earthenware and most woollen piece goods.

These are manifestly restrictive rates of duty; but since the United States, like Britain, has taken its stand on "most favoured nation" principles in tariff negotiations, concessions to British manufacturers must in practice be made primarily in respect of goods in whose case Britain takes the lion's share of such American imports as there are. Further, it would be difficult for Mr. Roosevelt to "put over" tariff reductions in respect of imports from Britain directly competitive with American manufactures unless the present and probable future volume of importation is small in relation to aggregate American consumption. A number of British specialities satisfy these conditions. For instance, fine yarns and high-grade shirtings woven from Egyptian cotton do not compete directly with American cotton textiles; nor do Scottish and English luxury

* See "Prospects of a Trade Agreement with England," by Percy W. Bidwell. *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1937.

tweeds in the realm of woollens and worsteds. Tin plate, linen yarns, carpets, earthenware, and a number of metal goods imported from Britain have never represented more than a fraction of America's total requirements, nor have they been imported in quantity from elsewhere. There is scope here for Mr. Roosevelt to exercise the powers given him by the Act of 1934, to reduce any duty by not more than 50 per cent.

That Act, however, empowered the President to act only in return for "considerations received." A mere promise by Britain not to increase tariff duties or impose quotas in future on imports from the U.S.A. would hardly be accepted by Congress as a valid consideration. There must be a definite counterpart in the shape of reduced British duties. The case for the American manufacturer in certain lines of business—automobiles, radio sets, machine tools, refrigerators and a host of domestic equipment specialities—has doubtless been urged by Mr. Cordell Hull and his negotiators; but the post-depression history of American tariff bargaining† suggests that, in negotiations *vis-à-vis* an industrialised country with a consumers' market of dimensions like those of the British, all the emphasis will be laid on the need to secure counter-vailing advantages for American exports of agricultural products.

The Ottawa Agreements hit the American wheat-farmer, pig-raiser, fruit-grower and lumberer very hard. Since 1929 British imports of American cereals, condensed milk and fruit have fallen enormously; our bacon and ham purchases from the U.S.A. have dropped by 80 per cent., and our imports of soft wood have been halved. The trade has been diverted to Canada; and there has been a similar diversion from American to Empire sources of supply in the case of tinned salmon and fruit, and—in minor degree—tobacco. Can Mr. Chamberlain agree to reductions in the British tariff on American agricultural products substantial enough to enable Mr. Roosevelt to quash opposition from his own industrialists towards more lenient treatment of imports of British manufactures? The odds against an agreement on an ambitious scale are heavy. It is true that, since last summer's Dominion Conference, Mr. Lyons in Australia has secured a new mandate and a freer hand from his electorate, while Mr. Mackenzie King in Canada has announced his desire to negotiate with the U.S.A. a new trade pact in replacement of the agreement due to expire less than a year hence. But even if Mr. Chamberlain can persuade the well-organised "lobby" of the Federation of British Industries that Britain needs larger imports of American motors, radiograms, tools and hot-plates; even if he can defy Lord Beaverbrook by signing, in defiance of the opposition of English pig-farmers and fruit-growers, another Black Pact with a foreign country, it is certain that the Dominion Premiers will demand their reciprocal pound of flesh.

It cannot be cut from the ribs of the British consumer. The Dominions have secured from Britain the maximum of preferential treatment it lies within our power to give. *A M. le Président la parole.* Can the Government at Washington—this is what it comes to—buy off the British Dominions? Theoretically, and in terms of common sense, yes. The Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Governments alone count; for South Africa is concerned solely with America's willingness—not at present questioned—to maintain indefinitely a $35 per ounce buying price for gold. If President Roosevelt could agree to reduce the American tariff on Canadian dairy produce, Australian wool and New Zealand butter, the Dominions would probably offer little objection to an intermediate British tariff on agricultural imports from the U.S.A.—mid-way between the Imperial preferential and the general schedule of rates. The difficulty is that the American export farmers—the cereal, fruit and bacon producers—and the timber shippers are sharply differentiated geographically and politically from the dairy farmers and wool growers who stand to be hit by concessions to the British Dominions.

† See "Foreign Trade Policy of the United States." *Political Quarterly*, Oct.—Dec., 1937.

If the strike of capital in the United States and the consequent economic recession had not frustrated hopes of a greater degree of scientific planning of agriculture, it might have been easier for President Roosevelt to cope with any temporary disturbances caused by an Anglo-American trade agreement on bold lines involving wide-spread reciprocal revision of tariff rates. With only a slight extension of A.A.A. schemes he could have made easy the adjustments possibly required. As it is, with the Administration at Washington in gradual, albeit reluctant, retreat from the New Deal, optimism with regard to the scope of a trade pact between the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth is hard to cherish. The political implications of an agreement, as a counter-blast to the anti-Comintern front, have been loudly proclaimed. The phrases may mean something; but, from the aspect of simple economic betterment *via* liberalised trade, it seems advisable not to expect too much.

JAPAN AND THE CHINESE CUSTOMS

JAPAN has asked that Customs officials in China, from Sir Frederick Maze downwards, should "co-operate" with the Japanese for a smooth working of the Customs. With the Japanese "co-operation" means the same thing as "sincerity"—a perfect submission to Japanese wishes. The Customs staff, apparently, is to remain undisturbed, except for Japanese supervision to see that it co-operates properly, but one thing that Japan cannot stand is that the takings be handled by China. This is intolerable because China might buy munitions with the money. Presumably Japan would put the money into the Yokohama Specie Bank, and then it could be used by Japan for buying munitions—a pretty big line of business just now with Japan, as was lately admitted by the Japanese Minister of Finance.

The stars in their courses fight against China. Her efforts to achieve independence are turned against her with devilish ingenuity. China always wanted to handle her Customs receipts herself, and in 1932 Mr. T. V. Soong, then Finance Minister, achieved this. Henceforth, instead of the money going into the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, and the surplus, after deducting the loan money, handed over to China, the money was put into the Central Bank of China, who paid out the interest and amortisation on the loans for which the Customs revenue stood guarantee. Had China not won this instalment of independence—which, after all, was more a saving of face than an actual gain—she would not now be robbed of the money.

The question will come up, of course, of the Inspector-General's position. When the Customs service was organised by Sir Robert Hart, it was agreed that the Inspector-General should be of British nationality, as Britain had at that time by far the largest share of the Chinese trade. Claims have been put forward in Japan, but so far have not been pressed, that the Japanese trade has outgrown the British, and that the Inspector-General should therefore be Japanese. The difficulties that would arise in this international service if a Japanese Inspector-General were appointed are so obvious that perhaps even the Japanese recognise them. And what is perhaps more to the point, the bonds for the interest on which the Chinese Customs revenue is earmarked are held to a far greater extent by British subjects than by Japanese. This should reasonably count for more than the bulk of trade, the nationality of which has nothing to do with the collection of revenue. Perhaps one should say "*should have* nothing to do with the collection of revenue."

After the Germans settled in at Tsingtao, they urged the appointment of Germans, for preference, to the Customs office there. It was on the face of it reasonable enough, as the port was specially for German trade, and a great many of the shipping documents were in German. But it was a bad principle. It brought questions of national favour into a

service which had been purely international, suitable men being appointed without regard to their nationality.

The Japanese naturally followed this example. Where their influence predominated, first at Dairen and Antung, and later at Tsingtao, they pushed Japanese diligently into the service, not for China's good or anybody else's except Japan's; and while no complaint arose regarding the German officials in the Tsingtao Customs, the Japanese are so ultra-nationalistic that it was impossible that their worming in wherever they could make a good excuse should have other than undesirable effects.

When the Japanese captured Manchuria in 1931-2, they made short work of the Customs. At Dairen the position was peculiar, as Dairen itself was a free port, the Customs collections only taking place when the goods passed the port barrier. At Antung there was a bunch of Japanese in the Customs service, who all betrayed their employers, except one who to his honour resigned and left the service.

From the Japanese point of view the appointment of Japanese Customs officials has more than justified itself in the fact that the trade in the ports where they are becomes more and more completely a Japanese monopoly. One would hesitate to use too suggestive a phrase but for the fact that, while the smuggling of deleterious drugs is effectually checked at ports under the old international system, drugs pour in where the Japanese have their own men. This is a matter of plain history, as may be read in the Geneva Opium Committee's reports. Nominally, of course, the stuff is smuggled, but why is the Customs inspection so much less efficient in the predominantly Japanese ports than in those which are more international? In view of the Geneva reports, there can be but one answer. The Powers have given notice to Japan that they expect the Chinese Customs, in which they have so vital an interest, to be respected. But Japan wants "co-operation" with the Japanese to be included. There is much more needed there than an assurance of bond amortisation payments. It is vital to China herself. It might be supposed that, where Japan gained control, she would for her own sake suppress the drug traffic. The very opposite is the case. In Manchukuo, as the Geneva report showed, it has increased terribly during the past six years. In fact, wherever the Japanese army goes, morphia and cocaine follow like deadly plagues.

Are the Powers going to stand for this sort of thing—for this is what Japanese control (or even "co-operation") in the Customs service means? And it means also the easier entry into China of Japanese goods of more legitimate kinds than of any other. In an affair like this, the Japanese simply do not understand what is meant by playing the game. Their treatment of foreign interests during their present war in China has demonstrated this clearly enough.

If the Powers are not sufficiently energetic to protect their own commercial interests in China, can it be hoped that they will lift a finger to save China from the ruin of drugs—far worse than the havoc of war? Hardly, perhaps, but the danger must not be overlooked. It is too serious for that, and black as the outlook is, we must still cling to the hope of mankind having a conscience—otherwise our own condition is miserable indeed.

A. MORGAN YOUNG

A LONDON DIARY

"THE Population debate really was fun," said a Member who himself contributed some good laughs; "we all knew that it did not matter a button really, and so we all let ourselves go like undergraduates. A Union debate might have been wittier, but the spirit would have been the same." I agree that it was fun, lots of fun. Several Members scintillated, A. P. Herbert in particular being allowed, without rebuke or protest, to be as brilliant, as fresh, indeed as ribald, as he liked, concluding with the sublime impertinence of repeating his own verses. I've heard dark comments about his speech losing him his Oxford seat, but I doubt if the country parsons who make up so large a part of a University electorate are such implacable prudes. But now that the laughter has subsided and people are rushing about drafting amendments and agreeing to deletions, it is legitimate to ask whether it did matter a button. The answer is that it mattered from two points of view. First it is serious that there should be bureaucrats—the word we use when we want to criticise those whom we at other times praise as the best Civil Service in the world—bureaucrats, I repeat, who constantly (there have been many recent instances) arrange for the insertion of new powers for themselves into Bills whose purpose could be served without these powers. One of the jobs of the House of Commons is to control and check this tendency. Secondly, it is quite unobjectionable and not totally unimportant that the authorities should be able to ask the questions that were originally to be included in this Bill, as distinct from those that some bureaucrats (again I repeat the word) inserted at a later stage. The study of population is of the greatest importance, and Prof. Carr-Saunders and his colleagues (who have explained what they want in various publications, amongst them the *Times*) are entitled to have relevant information, which can be got without Nosey-Parkerism. They want to have on the records the ages of mothers at the birth of each child and the number of previous children. They want each birth certificate to include the date of the parents' marriage and a statement on a man's death certificate (it is already made on a woman's) whether he was married or single. These seem harmless to me. Nor can there be any harm in asking whether a marriage was contracted in this country or abroad. The curious problem is why further unnecessary questions were included in the Bill and why, when he was questioned on the subject by Sir Arthur Salter, Mr. Robert Bernays said that all the questions mentioned in the Schedule had "been asked and approved of" by Prof. Carr-Saunders. This statement was apparently made on behalf of the Government and I should like to know the basis for it. The questions go far beyond the published suggestions of the Population Committee.

* * *

Lilian Baylis did one of the most satisfactory jobs of our time—she made drama live for people who would otherwise have thought it the perquisite of the rich or the highbrow. Externally her only reward was to become not merely Lilian Baylis, but Lilian Baylis, C.H., M.A. Oxon.(Hon.), LL.D. Birmingham (Hon.), and she liked to have some at least of these honorific initials printed after her name. Though no scholar, she loved the insignia of scholarship, and would take the stage after an "Old Vic" first night in cap and gown. Some have likened her to a saint, and certainly every week was Self-Denial Week with her. Or shall we say that self-indulgence was simply beyond her range and her dreams? But that little foible or foppery of the cap and gown reminded one of the secular dedicates, especially of pre-war feminism, with its flamboyant campaigns to establish equality of rights and powers. Miss Baylis was the heir of the Suffrage Movement, the High Anglican Church and essentially a social reformer and a missioner. The "Old Vic" was her "settlement." Inheriting control of a house of entertainment, she took and used it to the glory of God. If she had inherited a college or a conventicle, she would have gone about her business in the same way, fearing none and using all. Since it was "a coffee-music-hall" with lectures and concerts laid on and Morley College attached, which she found herself managing at the request of her aunt, Emma Cons, another great social worker, Miss Baylis resolved to go one better and make it a Shakespeare House. She was told not to be a fool, but her instinct was right. In later years she saw the whole original policy of a simple stock company offering cheap productions abandoned for stars and even "stunts." The climax of alteration came when a Broadway try-out of *The Country Wife*, probably the dirtiest play ever seen on the English stage, was the attraction. This was excusable in theory as "a classic," excusable, even delectable, in fact, as a

box-office "wow." Miss Baylis, presiding in the stage-box or sweeping on to the platform in cap and gown, was respectability's guarantor, and the leers of Wycherley were hidden in her academic silk. Did ever comedian invent a more richly ironical situation? Probably she had no inkling of the jest. This was the "Old Vic." The "Old Vic" was full. Incomings were, for once, exceeding expenditure, and surplus income meant more and better work by the "Vic." Only that mattered. She was for long the ruler of the "Vic" and always its slave. Simple-minded people who work eighteen hours a day for an ideal and a pittance may reasonably claim that they have no time or energy left for seeing jokes.

* * *

Last year the Artists' International Association, a broadly based body of artists who know that Fascism means the end of art as well as of letters, provided the Spanish Medical Aid with an ambulance for field work. This year painters, sculptors, photographers, cartoonists, and draughtsmen are offering each to do a portrait, the money to go to raising necessary money and medical equipment to maintain this ambulance. It's a new idea and a good one. The sitter pays, the artist gives his work and the money goes to the fund. It doesn't mean, since artists are artists, that they are not particular about whose portrait they do. If you want your child's portrait done for Christmas you may succeed, I gather, in getting Ethel Walker to do it; Eric Gill, on the other hand, won't do any except grown-ups, and other artists insist on no children under eight years old. Eric Ravilious, I hear, also wants to specialise; he will only do a portrait of a house. Other artists will paint animals, and "portrait tokens" are available for Christmas presents. It's a very good idea.

* * *

Here are two recent examples of commercial principles at work. An apprentice to an electrician I know had the misfortune to be struck on the eye by a tool springing up. He was taken to hospital and the eye removed. I am told that the facts are not disputed by the Insurance Company, and that they have offered £50 in full compensation. The second example was reported by an unemployment centre organiser in a letter to the *Times*. Falling out of employment over four months before, a man failed to make five weekly payments on his furniture bought on hire-purchase prior to his marriage. Despite the fact that he had paid regularly for over two years, the company stripped the house of every stick of furniture with the exception of a mattress, bed covering and a crucifix. They also omitted to remove the family—the husband, the wife with child and an infant.

* * *

I talked with the pale-faced young man who served me with coffee. Yes, men doing that kind of work should organise; if they'd a trade union they would work eight hours, not all night through as he did. Presently as he talked, he grew bitter, not with his present employer but with earlier employers, a great and luxurious hotel, which had given him the sack. He spoke of waiters as favoured happy mortals. He had "lived in" as a kitchen man, worked an apparently indefinite and appalling number of hours, and was once back rather late at night, after missing a bus. The staff manager, a military man, said that he wouldn't have missed the bus if he'd been keen on his job; he, the manager, was never late. He fined him 2*s.* 6*d.* out of a wage of 19*s.* a week. The employee refused to pay and was fired on the spot, the manager remarking that he'd see to it that his report to the Employment Exchange would lose him his dole. So it did, though that might have been his fault because he did not go to the Court of Referees to explain his case when he was asked. They might have taken his side. A common enough story, I suppose—a story of mechanical cruelty, a kind of stupid tyranny on the one side and a bitterness, a humiliation, a sense of helplessness that no one who has lived an independent life can realise unless he catches sight of it, as I did, in the eyes or hears it in the voice of a man who serves you as you hurry on to your next chosen occupation.

I am looking forward to the all-Chinese show in the Phoenix Theatre at 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 11th. I have never seen or heard a Chinese orchestra, Chinese acrobats, Chinese opera or Chinese dancing. Also there is to be a superfine Chinese juggler, a Chinese choir and a recital by a famous Chinese actress. A play is to be acted, as all the show is, by Chinese students in London. The only English name is that of Mr. Maurice Brown. You can get tickets from the China Campaign Committee, at the China Institute, 91 Gower Street, W.1. I emphasise this show so much, not only because I think it will be exceptionally interesting, but also because it has been announced in the press (quite correctly) that another society which purported to be collecting money for China and which also announced a performance at the Phoenix Theatre has been closed down. Naturally there is confusion. Don't believe anyone who doubts the performance at the Phoenix on the 11th; it will positively take place, will be interesting and will result in the dispatch of more medical supplies to China. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mrs. N. Swire.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

A protest against the employment of married women teachers in schools was made by Mr. J. P. Cronin at the adjourned monthly meeting of the Chorley Division Trades Council on Wednesday.

Mr. Cronin said the system of employing married women teachers was gradually becoming the cause of a suppressed scandal in the town. In his opinion it was a social evil bordering on the indecent. To ask parents to send babies of three and four years of age to schools staffed by this class of teacher was not only an insult but a lowering of the dignity of motherhood.—*Chorley Guardian.*

I was talking to a man the other day who said that most women don't really know their own good points—or their bad ones.

He suggested that it would be a good thing if every woman retired to her bedroom occasionally and just simply stared at herself in the looking-glass for half an hour.—Article in *News Chronicle.*

Sheriff Wilton, at Hamilton on Wednesday, advocated the use of coarse castor oil as an alternative to birching in respect of dealing with the wave of juvenile crime.

The Sheriff was dealing with a boy who had stolen cigarettes from motor-cars and who had previous convictions. On being told that the father of the boy would prefer him being birched than being sent to an approved school, Sheriff Wilton observed that he was rather against birching.

"I think it often has the opposite effect from that intended," he said. "A dose of coarse castor oil has proved effective in Italy. I think it ought to be tried here."—*East Anglian Times.*

Mr. A. H. Hill, inspector of London special schools, said that there were firms in London making standard articles who made a point of employing mentally defective girls. "It has been found that secondary school and well-educated girls are less efficient than subnormal girls," he added. "The girl who is well educated gets bored with doing the same thing over and over again and her mind begins to wander. Mentally defective girls make steady employees in a monotonous job and employers are glad to have them."—*Sunday Times.*

A gipsy woman came to me as I was hanging my washing out, and asked me for a piece of flannelette for a baby.

I gave it to her, and she said: "What warmth you bring to this baby shall be given back to you before many moons pass by."

My husband has just been to a whist drive and he won a lovely eiderdown.—Letter in *Sunday Referee.*

"Let them beware of officials and experts—and more particularly of scientific medical experts. (Labour cheers)."—*Times* Report of Debate on Population Statistics Bill.

THE IMPROVERS

THERE is a mischievous element in most of us which bristles at mention of people who wish to improve the world. You cannot even attempt to introduce poetry recitals into public-houses without incurring our bitter hostility. I know that I myself should hasten past any public-house in which I knew poetry was being recited, but that does not justify me, to my mind, in objecting to other people having poetry recited to them to the accompaniment of the noise of beer-pulls and soda-water splashes. In a more advanced civilisation than ours, I imagine, the bards would go from ale-house to ale-house moaning out their masterpieces to audiences that tapped their tankards appreciatively on the bar and the tables at the end of every verse. It was at great feasts in the old days that the bards with their improvised rhapsodies were most heartily welcomed. If a reciter of *Lycidas* would be greeted with cat-calls in many public-houses to-day, that surely is a reflection on the frequenters of public-houses. Why, then, should we not take steps to improve them by sending men round to read *Lycidas* and *The Leech-Gatherer* and *Rabbi Ben Ezra* to them till they learn to enjoy them or, at least, to pretend to enjoy them? If poetry is as important a thing as most people say, it should have its missionaries carrying its blessings where they are most needed.

Yet I cannot help being hostile to the notion. Few of us like it when people are obviously trying to do us good, and poetry-readings in inns would look horribly like an attempt to do us good. Besides, the chief object of a public-house is to provide a place where people can talk, and even good music would be an interruption. No one objects to music-hall songs being sung outside the saloon-bar door, but most people, however musical, would dislike having their attention distracted from the talk by Bach or Beethoven. This is probably a sign that we are as yet only half-civilised. Whether it is or not, I am afraid that poetry in public-houses will lead only to an enormous increase in the number of teetotallers.

Do not then try to improve the world if you wish to escape unpopularity. We have seen lately how even those who would like to see less litter thrown on England's once green and pleasant land, call forth the comminations of the lovers of things as they are. I have a friend who has conceived such a passion of hatred against anti-litter maniacs that I am sure the spectacle of an England free from litter would break his heart. He groans when he passes Box Hill in the train and sees it looking fairly tidy. He regards this as evidence that people no longer know how to enjoy themselves and that the anti-litter maniacs have spread a blight over the land with their Nosey-Parker creed. He has also a savage hatred of people who want to protect wild flowers. You would think, to hear him talk on the subject, that he was the sort of man who, on seeing a field of bluebells, would go berserk and set to tearing them up angrily by the roots and that, if he had his way, he would drag every wild-rose from the hedges and trample it under foot. You would be wrong, however. Deep down, he has the soul of a poet and a passion for the lesser celandine only less vehement than that of Wordsworth. I have seen his eyes fill with tears at sight of a bee-orchis, and he once wrote some very good verses to the first cuckoo-pint of the year. His love of flowers, however, is equalled by his dislike of interfering improvers, and he steadfastly refuses to face the question whether a flowerless England is not a possibility of the future, if the unpleasant people, who want to do good to other people, including posterity, do not get their way.

My friend is equally severe on those who wish to save birds and their eggs from destruction. It is not that he is the sort of man who throws stones at a nightingale when he sees one, or that he bears any ill-will to the race of robins, and looks forward gloatingly to the day when its numbers will be diminished to vanishing-point. There is in all England no greater lover of the lesser spotted woodpecker than he, and I have heard him say that he would give a pound to hear Tengmalm's owl whistling. But such is his antipathy to people who want to do good and, as the saying is, to leave the world better than they found it, that he would risk the destruction of the entire bird population rather than refrain from denouncing them as prigs and miscreants.

I have another friend who loses his reason in a similar way if anyone proposes to pull down some old cottages on hygienic grounds. I sympathise with him to some extent, for most of those who propose to pull down old cottages on hygienic grounds seem to me to have some financial interest in the acceptance of their proposal. Hygiene is an invaluable ally of money in the demolition of beautiful things that do not pay so well as they ought to pay. At the same time, it cannot be denied that many beautiful old cottages are insanitary, and that they ought to be pulled down. What I should like to see in every town and village would be a collection of well-meaning busybodies who would insist that, when beautiful old cottages are pulled down, beautiful new cottages must take their place. I do not see how the world can get on without busybodies. Without busybodies you can save neither wild flowers nor civilisation. I have not myself the energy to be a busybody, but how—at a distance—I love the breed!

Lately, for example, I was heart and soul with those busybodies who called for legislation, making it compulsory for everyone to have his or her fingerprints registered. That this might be useful in identifying people who had lost their memories or committed crimes is clear enough, and that it would cost no one very much trouble is equally clear. But simply because we hate interference even when it is for the general good and because the taking of fingerprints has a quite unnecessary association with crime, many people are as indignant at the proposal as if someone had suggested putting them in gaol. The registered fingerprint would, of course, in the eye of common sense, be no more shameful than a soldier's identity disc. But it would be an innovation of an interfering kind, and that is what few of us love at first sight.

I myself was conscious of a keen antipathy to innovators, interferers, and improvers during the week when I read an article suggesting the prohibition of coal-fires as a means of doing away with fog. It is not that I am one of those perverse people with a sentimental love of fog. I loathe it on land and on sea, in the country and in the town. If anything could be done to get rid of fog, I should be in favour of it—anything except the abolition of coal-fires. In the first place, however, I suspect that fogs would still appear even if there were not a single coal-fire burning between East Ham and Ealing. After all, you get fogs as thick as any London fog in the emptiest spaces of the Atlantic Ocean. In the second place, if coal-smoke can be shown to be the main cause of fog, it ought not to be beyond the skill of the inventors to devise a method of smoke-consumption that would enable us to burn coal in our grates without injuring our neighbours.

To me, indeed, it seems that the loss of the coal-fire would be a loss to civilisation. Other countries may contrive to be happy in winter without a blazing grate, but in this climate a room without coal burning has a mechanical, cheerless look. I burn gas and electricity as well, but only for utilitarian reasons. There is no exhilaration in looking at a stove. Coal, wood and turf light a fire in the heart: a stove is a negative thing that merely keeps you from feeling cold. Coal, too, necessitates a chimney that ventilates the room and keeps the air in enlivening circulation. It also admits of all manner of gradations of warmth and coolness in a room, so that the cold-blooded can sit close to it in comfort and the hot-blooded can escape in a corner from its radiations. It is no wonder that the fireside makes such an appeal to the sentiment as a symbol of kindliness and fellowship. It is at once the justification and the glory of the English winter. If the infant Shake-

speare had been brought up beside a stove, I doubt whether Elizabethan poetry would have been so good as it is.

Hence, though I love the busybody and the improver, I do not wish to see the best things in the world improved out of existence. A good many of the so-called improvements I have seen during my life seem to me to have been the result merely of a love of change for change's sake. The passion for change affects, not only our clothes, but our cakes, so that fine old cakes are allowed to disappear and not nearly so fine cakes take their place—evidence, some say, of inevitable progress. Even in our speech, we innovate for innovation's sake, and Mr. A. P. Herbert protests in vain against the inrush of needless monstrosities into the vocabulary. These words have always their defenders on the ground that they improve and enrich the language. I myself am in favour of all improvements that improve more than they destroy. That seems to me to be the only test. Is it a test, I wonder, that poetry-recitals in public-houses or the abolition of the coal-fire can pass?

Y. Y.

NEW ROADS OR OLD

WHY are we still trying to use the road system of the eighteenth century when we have two and three-quarter million motor vehicles? For that is what we are doing to-day. Our roads (apart from the new streets in urban districts) were constructed for the stage-coaches, the waggons and the horsemen of the pre-railway era. The principal roads of the country, like the Great North Road or the Bath Road, were built to carry perhaps an average of ten vehicles an hour. That would have been considered heavy traffic. The same roads are required to-day to carry some 200 vehicles an hour, and those certainly not vehicles whose maximum speed is 12 m.p.h. These roads are the same in essentials to-day as they were a hundred years ago. The Great North Road can still only carry a single line of traffic in each direction for 190 of its 316 miles of length, and the Bath Road still changes its width some twenty times from a minimum of 19 to a maximum of 40 feet. We have indeed made a few by-passes, we have rounded off a few bad corners, we have markedly improved the surface; but we have still with us the hump-backed bridges of the canal days and some five thousand railway level crossings. Since the first motor vehicles appeared on the roads forty years ago the total road mileage of the country has been increased by less than 2 per cent. In 1935 motor vehicles had increased by nearly 2,000 per cent. over those in 1910.

The road traffic problem is far more acute in England than anywhere in the world, for the simple reason that in England there is a much greater density of traffic. Our total roads are 176,103 miles, and we have 15.5 motors for every one of those miles. In the U.S.A. the corresponding figure is 8.2, in France 4.9, in Germany 4.4. Of these 176,000 miles of road only 43,870 are classified. It is the classified roads which carry probably as much as two-thirds of the total traffic. The result is an increasing density producing a congestion which will be intensified to the point of standstill if the Minister of Transport's recent prediction that we shall have twice as many vehicles on the roads in fifteen years is to any extent justified. We are now killing more than 20 people a day on the roads. In the South African War 5,744 soldiers were killed in action; the road deaths for the first ten months of this year were 5,439. The injured in a year are now more than a quarter of a million. That is the human side of the loss involved. Probably no one could calculate the loss to industry caused by unnecessary delays; it is immense. But it is certain that insurance companies pay more than £20 millions a year in claims arising from road accidents.

So far all efforts to reduce this carnage and this loss have failed. All that can be claimed is that casualties are not increasing as rapidly as the number of vehicles is increasing. Is it perhaps because a mistaken policy has been followed? A hundred years ago the first railways were being constructed. From the beginning the new locomotives were most carefully segregated from all other traffic. They were run on specially laid tracks fenced off from all access by persons or by other vehicles. The mobility of the locomotive was limited by its confinement to these tracks, but a high degree of safety was attained. It is precisely its mobility that gives motor transport its immense utility. The problem is, therefore, how to enable it to fulfil its true functions as the servant and not the destroyer of those who use it. Exactly thirty years ago Anatole France wrote in *Penguin Island*:

> The Penguins of to-day make me think of the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians worshipped the crocodiles that devoured them. The Penguins to-day worship the motors that crush them. Without doubt the future belongs to the metal beast. . . . The motor will soon begin to perform its true function, putting its strength at the service of the entire people. But in order that the motor may cease to be injurious and become beneficent, we must build roads suited to its speed. We ought not to allow slower vehicles, or mere animals, to go upon these roads . . . and we should create order and harmony among the means of communication of the future. This is the wish of every true citizen.

Destruction of life on the roads will increase, and the burdens on industry will become heavier until there is done now what was done a hundred years ago for the railways. New tracks must be built for through fast motor traffic. And on them other forms of transport must not be permitted.

It is on these lines that other countries have tackled the problem. There has been a good deal of publicity given to the recent visit to Germany of a large party of Members of Parliament and others, when they went to see the new "Autobahnen" now under construction there. Many of those who went have published their impressions, and they urge our transport officials to go also to see for themselves what is being done. The congestion on the roads in Germany is, of course, nothing like our own, but the Germans have preferred not to wait until the problem becomes more acute. It may be noted in passing that their new road works have given employment to some quarter of a million men, and that we have here more than a million without work. Italy has its "autostrada." In the U.S.A. new roads are being built rather than to attempt to make existing ones adequate for the traffic demands upon them.

The call for a newly conceived road system comes from all sections of the community, except perhaps large shareholders in railway companies, whose directors, so it was stated the other day in Parliament, are eager "to wring the necks" of any competing system. It is not surprising that the motor-users who paid last year the colossal sum of £75 millions in licences and petrol and oil duties should protest most loudly against the costly chaos and demand remedies. Every passenger in a bus is a direct motor-user and every customer in every shop in the land is an indirect user of motor transport.

What would be the cost of new roads? In Germany the "autobahnen" are being built for £35,000 a mile. This includes the necessary land purchase. These new roads avoid all urban areas, with which they are connected by service roads. It has been estimated that in England such roads could be constructed for not more than £50,000 a mile, that is, if the same principle of making them through rural areas, where land is about £25 per acre, were adopted. If 2,000 miles of trunk roads were made (they are making 4,500 miles in Germany) the total cost, therefore, would be some £100 millions—ten millions a year for ten years. There would result, even from this modest programme, a great easing of congestion on the existing main roads, and on the new roads an enormous reduction in accidents. This has been proved even on roads used by all forms of traffic where dual carriage-ways have been provided. On that section of the Glasgow–Edinburgh road where this has been done, in spite of 34 per cent. more traffic than on the single carriage-way section, there has been an 80 per cent. decrease in accidents. Along the new roads ribbon building would be absolutely prohibited. Properly built in conformity with the contours of the land they would disfigure it far less than the destruction of trees and houses

necessary to widen most of the present roads. The present policy of the Government is to improve our roads to bring them nearer to the requirements of our traffic. It costs to widen an existing main road, with double carriage-ways, cycle tracks, roundabouts, crossings, etc., some £100,000 a mile, double the cost of a new road. In New England it has been found six times as costly to carry out widening schemes as to make new roads.

The position with regard to expenditure on the roads is curious. Five years ago in 1932, £68 millions were spent. In that year the road taxes brought in £55 millions. This year the amount spent is to be £60 millions, while the road taxes produce £75 millions and there are half a million more vehicles in use. Of the £100 millions, which it was announced two years ago were to be devoted to road improvements in five years, only some £15 millions have been so spent. That more vigorous measures are necessary few will doubt. Are our intelligences so weak, our wills so feeble, that we can only look on helplessly while great numbers of our fellow-citizens are cut down?

C. BOYD BOWMAN

Correspondence

CONCESSIONS TO GERMANY

SIR,—I venture to suggest that you should reconsider your statement that :

> The alternatives now are to prepare to fight at once or to agree to concessions. The former means suicide and is nobody's choice, not even Hitler's.

Does not your second sentence contradict the first? If Hitler does not want war at once—and I agree with you that he does not—we shall not have to fight at once even if we make no further concessions. The internal conditions in Germany are such as to make war a risky adventure and Hitler believes that time is on his side. He is right, if Anglo-French policy does not change.

The immediate danger, as I see it, is not war in the strict sense of the term, but the application to other countries of the method that, thanks to the British and French Governments, has been so successful in Spain. There is reason to believe that an attempt has already been made to apply that method to France. It is significant that for the last few weeks certain reactionary papers in France and elsewhere have been running a story about a French Communist plot, which appears to have been invented by Doriot. About a fortnight ago a foreigner had a conversation with some members of a reactionary organisation in a certain town in Eastern France. They told him all about the Communist plot and said that the "Nationals" must forestall the Communists and act first. They explained that what they counted on was that there would be civil war in France, that Germany would intervene "to restore order" and that the British Government would adopt a policy of non-intervention. That might well have happened, if the plot had not been discovered in time. Concessions to Hitler will not stop this sort of thing. They are much more likely to encourage it.

Nor shall we avert war by concessions, unless we are prepared to give Hitler anything and everything that he may demand in the future. At best, as you appear to recognise, we shall only postpone it, as Hitler desires. A mere postponement of war might have a certain attraction for a man of my age, for it would probably mean that I should not live to see it and should leave my children and grandchildren to bear the brunt. But somehow that does not appeal to me. It would be very rash to count on a modification of the Nazi regime from within. Nothing but an unsuccessful war is likely to bring that about and, as "A German Citizen" says in his letter, every concession to Hitler strengthens his position in Germany and makes a modification of the regime from within more unlikely.

In any case, it would be futile to offer Hitler economic or even colonial concessions, because he does not want them. He has raised the question of colonies merely as a bargaining counter to get the consent of the British Government to give him a free hand in Central Europe. His offer to postpone the return of the former German colonies for six years shows this. He knows that at present he has no hope of getting more than the return of those colonies and he believes that in six years Germany will dominate the greater part of the Continent and will be in a position to demand a great deal more and to attack the British Empire if the demand is not satisfied. The only question is whether or not we are prepared to give Hitler a free hand in Central Europe. As the diplomatic correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* said on November 27th, the document summarised in that paper on November 24th, which reached London before Lord Halifax went to Berlin, was "an authoritative summary of German foreign policy, irrespective of the results of Lord Halifax's pilgrimage." That is to say, Hitler can do without any undertaking on the part of the British Government. He will do as he likes in Austria and Czechoslovakia, unless he is sure that the British Government will intervene.

Advocates of further concessions to Hitler seem to me to leave out of account the fact that a Fascist State is aggressive and predatory by its very nature. A country becomes great, as Hitler understands it, by a victorious war or by imposing its will on countries too weak or too craven to defend themselves. For more than four years we have been trying to buy off gangsters and blackmailers and we are now in the position in which people silly enough to do that always find themselves sooner or later. We now have to choose between making a stand and continuing the policy that has produced the present situation. If we continue it, the situation will go from bad to worse.

For my part, I am convinced that the only possible policy is to make a stand and that in that policy lies the only hope of averting war. In his speech to the League Assembly, on July 1st, 1936, Léon Blum said :

> It is therefore necessary to accept the possibility of war in order to save peace. . . . I say unhesitatingly that, in the present state of the world, this risk must be run with a full knowledge of the facts and with full courage. I agree, also without hesitation, that the more boldly the risk is run the smaller it will be.

Unhappily, Léon Blum failed to act on his own maxim, but the results of his failure are a negative justification of his maxim. The danger of war is greater now than it was on July 1st, 1936, and the only way to avert it at this eleventh hour is to put Blum's maxim into practice. If England, France, and Russia jointly and publicly declared to-morrow that they would tolerate no aggression against or interference with Austria, Czechoslovakia, or any other country in Europe, it is extremely improbable that there would be any such aggression or interference and, if there were none, there would be no war. If M. Delbos, when he visits the capitals of Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, could tell the Governments of those countries that England, France, and Russia had entered into a pact of mutual assistance which was open to every other European country, it is extremely probable that those Governments would consent to join the pact and would be followed by other countries.

The countries that have been drawn into the German orbit have been driven into it by the poltroonery of the British and French Governments. A Balkan diplomatist said to me recently : "How can we have any confidence in people that have not even the courage to defend their own interests?" He was right so far as national interests are concerned, but his remark needs to be qualified. The influential pro-German group represented by the *Times*, the *Observer*, and the *Daily Mail*, who appear to have a considerable voice in British foreign policy, are undoubtedly defending their own class and economic interests. They evidently realise that, as Professor Robert A. Brady says in the last chapter of his interesting book, *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism*, Fascism is no more than the politically conscious phase of the modern form of capitalism and is the only means by which the capitalist system, which has already broken down, can be saved from final and complete ruin.

ROBERT DELL

7 Avenue Gaspard-Vallette,
Geneva, Switzerland.

SIR,—You say three courses were open to the British Government in its dealing with Germany. One, to stand by the League and make it a reality. Two, to fight as soon as could be. Three, to concede something.

There was a fourth course—there still is. That is to form a democratic Bloc. Russia is ready to join, France would welcome the plan, the United States would co-operate, if they did not at once become a member. The Scandinavian States would come in; any others could do so if they chose—and if they aimed at preserving democracy and peace.

No fighting would be necessary. The power of the Bloc would be overwhelming. The Fascist bluff could be called and when

their " hands " went down, all the world would see what weak cards they held.

The trouble is that the present British Government does not want the world to see this. HAMILTON FYFE

TWO QUESTIONS

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent, C.D., in your issue of November 20th, may I say that, even if the solution of A.B.'s problem is to advocate collective security, " which implies, indeed, the use of force, but its use in defence of international law," the only " international law " in existence at the moment seems to be the maintenance of the *status quo*. Surely the first requirement of any system of law is justice and since, at the present time, of the 68 nations in the world, eight between them own two-thirds and the remaining sixty, including Germany, Italy and Japan, are herded together in an area little larger than the British Empire, then maintenance of the *status quo* cannot reasonably be described as justice, and therefore I do not see how anyone can advocate collective security " with a clear conscience."

Further, in the administration of the law of the land, the criminal is arrested by police acting merely as instruments, and handed over to an impartial court of justice for trial, but in " international law," the " law-abiding " nations, i.e., those satisfied with the *status quo*, constitute themselves police, judge, jury, public prosecutor and executioner. There is no counsel for the defence. The Treaty of Versailles may be taken as a fair specimen of international justice.

The law also punishes the actual criminal, and if it can be shown that a prisoner was forced to act unlawfully against his will, or was the dupe of a master criminal, then he is dealt with leniently. In international law the reverse is the case—the punishment falls on the people who were the dupes of their leaders and the master criminal almost always escapes scot-free—there are very few instances of armament manufacturers and politicians being killed in war.

Finally, I fail to see that it matters in what spirit bombs are dropped—the effects are likely to be the same M. B.

EDUCATION IN AFRICA

SIR,—I was disappointed that your article on " Education in Africa " did not provoke more than one brief though valuable letter, for at least one of your contributor's references to Missions ought not to pass unchallenged. She asks whether, in justice to the taxpayers, Government money can be handed over to two bodies " not primarily concerned with secular education, and unable to command the most highly qualified staff." I submit that the first part of this question represents an old-fashioned and inadequate view of the work of Missions, while the second is a mis-statement of the facts.

The arbitrary distinction between sacred and secular in education is not accepted by the modern missionary. In the Anglican Diocese of Uganda well over fifty per cent. of the European workers are full-time educationists, who certainly do not regard themselves as " not primarily concerned with secular education." For to them the intellectual, as well as the physical and spiritual development of the African is an essential part of their Christian task. Without them and their Roman Catholic opposite numbers, there would have been no education in Uganda at all.

As to being unable to command the most highly qualified staff, the educational Missions of Africa do not feel particularly inferior to Governments in this respect, whether it is a question of degrees and diplomas or of ability to do the job. Professor Julian Huxley, who is not likely to be regarded as a violent partisan of Missions, described one of the Uganda Anglican Mission schools as the best school, Government or otherwise, which he saw in East Africa. Results which can win such praise are not achieved without a staff highly qualified in the essentials of education.

Bishop Tucker College, Uganda. A. V. P. ELLIOTT, Editor, *Uganda Church Review*.

CORONATION COMMENTARY

SIR,—I see that in your current issue there is a reference to *Coronation Commentary* having been chosen by the Right Book Club. This was in fact not the case, as it was never endorsed by the Selection Committee. Messrs. Foyle's were, I understand, in communication with the publishers in regard to it; but as soon as the book was sent to me, as a member of the Selection Committee, for my view, I pointed out that the chapter on th Abdication was clearly defamatory and that I could in no wa agree to the selection of the book for the Right Book Club. Thi was about a week before the Duke of Windsor's solicitors issue the writ on his behalf.

I am not complaining of the statement in your issue, as it is a echo of an impression which did exist at that time. I feel, however that in the interests of historical accuracy as to the position of th book with regard to the Right Book Club you may care to publis this letter. DEREK WALKER-SMITH

2 Paper Buildings, Temple, E.C.

[We are pleased to print and accept this letter as a personal explanation. But " an echo of an impression which did exist a that time " is a charming addition to the already extensive an ingenious vocabulary of evasion. The quite simple fact is tha *Coronation Commentary* was announced in the Right Book Club' prospectus as their chosen book of the month.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WHITE POPPIES

SIR,—The Peace Pledge Union is endeavouring to find suitable positions for the two members who were recently dismissed fro a City firm for wearing white poppies. As the men live with thei parents and must find work in London, none of the offers w have so far received has proved suitable. We are continuing ou efforts to find satisfactory positions for them, and would be ver glad if any readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION who ca help would communicate with us. The men are both studying for chartered accountancy and we shall be delighted to send particulars of their qualifications to anyone who applies.

The Peace Pledge Union, 96 Regent Street, London, W.1. MAX PLOWMAN

FOOT FETICHISM

SIR,—In the *Oxford Mail* of November 12th, 1937, there is an account of the appeal of Harold Thwaite, aged 23, a former undergraduate, against conviction " for persistently importuning for an immoral purpose." He was sentenced at Bow Street on October 5th to three months with hard labour for a first offence and seven days for a second offence. It appears that this young man, who is himself the son of a doctor, had been under the care of Dr. Alexander Potts, psychological adviser to the Birmingham magistrates, for the past four years. Dr. Potts stated that Thwaite was " psychologically undeveloped," was suffering from foot fetichism and did not appear to exhibit any of the characteristics of homosexuality.

This point was clearly brought out by Mr. Norman Birkett K.C., who was appearing for Thwaite and made an appeal for the remission of the sentence so that he could have " adequate and suitable treatment," because there was still a chance that he might once more " become a respectable citizen." In spite of this energetic and reasoned argument, however, the appeal committee of which Mr. Ernest Fulton, K.C. was the chairman, announced that the sentence would remain.

If this report is accurate, one cannot but feel amazed that such an occurrence is still possible. If this young man is indeed suffering from foot fetichism, what possible chance has he of getting better in prison (there is no mention of his being provided with facilities for any treatment). It seems that the expert medical evidence was completely ignored. Is it not possible to bring pressure to bear on the authorities to ensure that such cases are dealt with by specialised machinery instead of being subjected to a penalty which, if the report is correct, appears to be both inhuman and cruel. EDWARD F. GRIFFITH, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

89 Harley Street, London, W.1. HELENA WRIGHT, M.B., B.S.

"TOO BLOODY POLITEFUL"

SIR,—In noticing Mr. A. F. Tschiffely's *Don Roberto* in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, Mr. Nevinson gives us sympathetic memories of " Our Hidalgo " which all who knew him must be interested to read. But may I point out one remark that needs modification? He writes: " As an extreme revolutionary and an obvious aristocrat he was welcomed by neither Party [of the Socialists]." I can't at the moment look up references and say for certain how the Social Democratic Federation viewed Cunninghame Graham, but there was no such feeling about him in the Socialist League or in William Morris's mind. In early days of their acquaintance, I remember my father's comment on him

as being " too bloody politeful," but all the survivors from those days know that this was lightly spoken, and that the two men became friendly, and that from the first my father was struck by his personality. MAY MORRIS

Kelmscott Manor, Lechlade,
Gloucestershire.

ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES

SIR,—With regard to the Abyssinian refugees in Kenya, whose numbers, in contradiction to the Colonial Secretary's statements in the House of Commons, are estimated by the International African Service Bureau at 8,000, it would be relevant to have answers to the following questions :

(1) When did the majority of the refugees leave their native country ?

(2) How many of them are deserters from the Abyssinian armies of Ras Desta and Ras Imru ?

(3) How many of them are Amharas, how many belong to the subject races and how many are nomadic ?

(4) How many are bandits fleeing from justice ?

(5) What evidence has the association for supposing that the refugees would be unjustly treated by the Italian authorities on their return ? In the absence of such evidence, in what does the danger of their repatriation lie ? PATRICK BALFOUR

St. James's Club, Piccadilly, W.1.

Miscellany

ROGER MARTIN DU GARD

ROGER MARTIN DU GARD has been given the Nobel prize for literature. All his friends are glad but perhaps a little surprised, for though he is honoured and admired in France, and has a large public of readers, we had not quite realised how large that public is. An enthralling story-teller, he is read for many other things than his story—for his power of creating characters and making them live and talk with astonishing verisimilitude, for his power of reproducing with photographic fidelity and a minimum of words their psychological ambience and material surroundings. He has a piercing eye, a just mind and an unusual desire to eliminate his own personality from everything he writes. He is interested in the things in which to-day we are chiefly interested—the strife of nations and parties, the ideologies of government, social conditions and tendencies, war and peace, love and religion, men and women. But he has not—or we thought he had not—the world-wide reputation which these qualities would seem to ensure. Perhaps this is because he has no genius whatever for self-advertisement. He avoids the photographer and the reporter with a kind of phobia. He never gives an interview—not even now—nor a lecture. No letters of his appear in the papers, no echoes in the daily press. He never discusses in public the amount of his sales, or his favourite " star," or his taste in music. He has never been to New York—even for a fortnight. These negative qualities, which have restricted his admirers, even in France, to those who love literature for its own sake, have probably been still more fatal to a just appreciation of him in England, where the first volumes of his *Thibaults*, though I believe they have been translated, have met with very little success, and where recently it was impossible to find a publisher for the three volumes of *Eté* 1914.

To continue my negatives a little longer, I should like to say that though Roger Martin du Gard is not a great moralist, an incomparable artist, a ferment in men's minds like Gide, though he has not the blinding light of Valéry's intellect, nor the scriptural magnificence of Claudel's prose, it seems to me that the Stockholm committee could not have made a more fitting choice among French men of letters. There are extraneous reasons that make it unsuitable or unnecessary to bestow the Nobel prize upon either of the three great writers I have mentioned. Jules Romains' " roman-fleuve " *Les Hommes de Bonne Volonté* is the only book which might—which does—deliberately challenge comparison with *Les Thibault*, and which, though it was begun much later, has already greatly surpassed it—at any rate in bulk. The two rivers are in effect very different—Jules Romains' a flood, sweeping over vast tracts of country, carrying in its rapid course enormous quantities of waste matter, mud, refuse and débris, noisily bearing on its troubled surface a heteroclite collection of insignificant rubbish as well as a few useful and even valuable articles, if one could only fish them out of the monstrous tide, while Martin du Gard's stream pours its tamed and purified waters steadily and quietly between carefully constructed embankments in a deliberate course directed by a master engineer. In fact and briefly—Martin du Gard is an artist and not the most brilliant, and most brilliantly advertised, of super-journalists.

Roger Martin du Gard has written comparatively little for a man of his age—though he is young to be a Nobel prize-winner. His first book, *Devenir*, he disowns ; his second he called in and pulped before it was published. It was in 1913 that *Jean Barois* appeared and established its author in the front rank of French novelists. The subject of *Jean Barois* is the *affaire Dreyfus*, or rather its repercussion on the life-history of the hero, and more generally on the social history of France. It is presented in quasi-dramatic form, that is, in a series of dialogues, introduced with a few brief stage-directions. And here Martin du Gard shows for the first time his astonishing gift for life-like dialogue—a gift brought to perfection in *Les Thibault*. One *hears* his characters speak ; they use their own words, never the author's. The author, that familiar go-between and necessary interpreter between the fictitious character and the reader, so obtrusive sometimes, so difficult to forget, so much in our way, whom we so often long to be rid of because he apparently prevents us from getting at the heart of the matter, here seems to be almost non-existent, to have reduced himself to the thinnest transparency. This is no doubt a primordial gift for dramatic writing, and in considering Martin du Gard we must not forget how immensely he is attracted by the theatre, how long he spent in the intimacy of Jacques Copeau when he was manager of the Vieux-Colombier, and for whom he wrote two admirable farces.

Les Thibault is an essential document for the study of pre-war France. In tracing the history of a French family of *grands bourgeois* from about the beginning of 1900 to the summer of 1914, Martin du Gard gives us a picture of greater scope than *Jean Barois*, but the inspiration is the same. His aim is to paint a society and a certain number of individuals under the impact of great public events, and for all its ten volumes *Les Thibault* has evidently been planned from its first conception as a single whole and is composed in every detail.

The author himself comes of a family of *grands bourgeois*. He knows his Thibaults inside out—where and how they lived at the beginning of the century ; their solid incomes ; their sombre, uncomfortable apartments ; the crushing force of their respectability ; the father's tyranny based on the commands of the Catholic Church ; the obstinate blindness of his narrow-minded morality ; the elder son outwardly conforming, the younger driven into the extremes of rebellion ; both brothers hurrying with all their world towards a final catastrophe which we foresee and they do not. The story is told rapidly, read easily. The flow of time is conveyed with dexterous, almost imperceptible touches. Martin du Gard is a realist, a fervent admirer and disciple of Tolstoy's, but he is not a materialist. The life of the spirit is as real to him as the objective world, but he hates to veil his realities in a mist of words, of rhetoric, of poetry. His whole artistic effort has been—one can follow it almost step by step, from volume to volume—to attain limpidity of language as well as of vision, clarity of style as well as of judgment, to submit his sensibility to his sense. His endeavour is to forego more and more strictly every meretricious aid of literature and picturesqueness, to be less and less the superficial reporter, to be more and more faithful, honest and conscientious.

It is this that makes his picture of the summer of 1914—"'Tis the times' plague when madmen lead the blind"—so profoundly impressive. It is this that has made possible such a masterly and lucid synthesis of all that weltering confusion of terror, indecision and greed on the part of the governments, of blind and abject obedience on the part of the masses, of the dispersion and inefficacity of individuals in the tornado. It is this that makes *Eté* 1914 a great book—a history, an appeal, a warning.

He spent many years on it, labouring with a method and scrupulousness which only Flaubert perhaps has ever equalled, distilling and redistilling it word by word until every quality of style except clarity and exactness seems to have disappeared. That is his aim—to have no style—a singular one, it must be confessed, in an age whose taste has become more and more greedy of the highly flavoured, of rich and rotten ingredients. It perhaps needed the more naturally unspoilt palate of foreign connoisseurs to place such virtues so high. These difficult virtues which he has acquired so diligently and with such abnegation are apt to seem simple to the unwary. Martin du Gard's consummate virtuosity is more visible in those tiny vignettes of village life called *Vieille France*, each of which has the concentrated deadliness of a single drop of poison, and in his short story, *Confidence Africaine*, that apparently unaffected, natural, *sympathique* tale of a brother's and sister's incest—a prodigious *tour de force*.

DOROTHY BUSSY

LILIAN BAYLIS

IN 1898 Miss Lilian Baylis took over the management of the theatre near Waterloo Station known as the "Old Vic," which had been carried on since 1881 by her Aunt, Miss Emma Cons, as the "Royal Victoria Coffee and Music Hall." This combination of coffee-house and music hall was one of those late Victorian products of philanthropic idealism which, like the gas lamps of the period, spread little pools of light in the dismal materialistic darkness of that philistine age. When future historians come to write the social history of that time I imagine that they will reach the conclusion that the establishment of coffee halls and teashops was a major social innovation, contributing far more to the revolution in the life and habits of Londoners than any other single event. With this alternative to the gin-palaces and bad "pubs" of that time came a fresh impetus to the thirst for knowledge among the working class which led during the first half of the nineteenth century to the establishment of so many philosophical societies, literary institutes, etc., etc., up and down the country.

Miss Baylis came into the management of the "Old Vic" in the middle of that stimulating Socialist movement which was under the influence of William Morris, and therefore for the greater part of her thirty-nine years' activity the motive behind her work, its very mainspring, was cultural and idealistic. When the war came in 1914 she had already been in control for sixteen years. In these years her character had set and her point of view and aims were not likely to undergo much change. Some of the tenacity of purpose and strength of character everybody who came into contact with her was forced to recognise may be ascribed to that long arduous apprenticeship in doing what she conceived to be her duty. I have missed any recognition of this fact in the obituary notices of Lilian Baylis that I have read. Also, I miss the recognition of the nature of what she conceived her duty to be. Nobody has said:

"Miss Baylis started in 1898 as the manager of a very inferior, ill-equipped theatre in one of the most sordid and depressing parts of London, and having survived every other theatrical manager in London without exception, ended by being the manager in 1937 of two excellent and well-equipped theatres, one (Sadler's Wells) being entirely new, the freeholds of which are in the possession of the management, all this having been achieved by the most austerely artistic policy conceivable—namely, the performing throughout nine months of the year of Shakespeare's plays and classical opera."

Nobody has said this, and nobody—least of all in the daily press—has pointed out that Miss Baylis loved her theatre and everything connected with it as a living institution created by her and her fellow-workers. It was this activity she loved, this co-operation between audience and stage in a common pleasure. What she felt to be her duty was to increase this activity, not to make money for herself, and it is this which distinguishes her from that totally different but vastly larger class of theatre managements, mostly syndicates, who are gamblers or speculators, or merely investors, whose primary concern is not the activity itself, but the money that can be made out of it. It is hardly considered decent to-day to be possessed by a passion. Vague humanitarianism there is in plenty and a certain amount of doctrinaire fanaticism—although this is often more vocal than real; but a quite human and intense passion for somebody or something concrete, such as Miss Baylis had for her theatres, is rather alien to the spirit of the age, or perhaps I should say of the age which is just concluding. But this is what Miss Baylis had and it is what made her so disconcerting and such an enigma to a great many people. Mr. Harcourt Williams in his excellent book, *Four Years at the Old Vic*, tells an amusing story which reveals the sort of woman Lilian Baylis was. When the engagement of Miss Naomi Royde Smith to Mr. Ernest Milton was announced, Miss Baylis said to them by way of giving them her blessing: "Come to me in your joys, come to me in your sorrows, but I've no time for chit-chat." Mr. Harcourt Williams also relates that when he first went to her as producer in 1929 he was warned: "Wait until she asks you to pray with her"; but the warning was beside the mark, for he says that she never flaunted her religious views; "the nearest I approached to any such occurrence was when, more than usually hard up, she said to me: 'I must find some money. I keep praying for money, but the Almighty only sends me penny collections.'"

Miss Baylis had the driving force which is only possessed by those who are filled with a passionate idea. "Truly to want," says Kierkegaard, "is a great gift," and I might add a very rare one. Miss Baylis wanted a second theatre and she got it. When one considers the years of depression and discouragement, the constant struggle to make both ends meet under which she laboured all her life at the "Old Vic," one can form some notion of the audacity and courage which enabled her to add another theatre to her burden. Mr. Harcourt Williams confesses to having been a sceptic:

> At that time I never quite believed in Sadler's Wells, although years ago, when I first heard of the scheme, I thought it splendid and sent my modest donation at once. But, now, well, it seemed an added complication to an already over-full day. *All the departments were against it at heart, and the difficulties really seemed insurmountable.*

I have italicised the last sentence in order to emphasise the true nature of Miss Baylis's achievement. It is no use whatever drawing attention to this or that failing of hers, to her parsimoniousness, for example, or paying a tribute to her kindness of heart. None of these qualities is important relatively to her strength of character and her passionate belief in her work and her ambition to extend it.

Like all people in whom a true passion lives, Miss Baylis was very adaptable and open-minded in all matters which did not conflict with her main purpose. She was also very catholic-minded and allowed her various producers their heads when she felt they were serious and meant business. She allowed Shaw, Tchekov, Ibsen and other modern dramatists to be represented at the "Old Vic," and she gave her blessing to the introduction of ballet, which is now such a deservedly famous feature of the Sadler's Wells repertory. The one thing she would not have permitted was the degradation of her theatre into a commercial concern or the conversion of it into a cinema.

But now she has gone, having securely laid the foundations of a national theatre, ballet and opera house in London, while other people have been talking about it for a quarter of a

century, it is a grave problem for the Governors to select her successor. What is wanted now is a manager who cares passionately—at least as passionately as Mr. Gordon Craig or Mr. H. Granville-Barker—for the art of the theatre and who at the same time is capable, practical, resolute, not easily turned aside from the straight path, with a gift for selecting producers and conductors and, in addition, with plenty of solid common sense. One only has to enumerate these qualities to realise the full measure of Miss Baylis's capacity. Where, indeed, is one to find such a person? But even more than this is necessary. A bold adventuring mind is now required. It is time that the "Old Vic" and Sadler's Wells were put conspicuously on the map as London's theatrical centre. Mr. Harcourt Williams pertinently remarks:

> Why cannot I book a seat for the "Old Vic" or Sadler's Wells at a "Library"? Of course it can be done if one insists, but the fact remains that the Libraries do not like doing it. Multitudes have been deterred from coming to us for this reason, and it means also that the said booking agencies have no information about us to give inquirers. The cause of this I have never been able to fathom.

The cause is not difficult for me to fathom, but I shall say no more than this, that all such handicaps to the development of Sadler's Wells and the "Old Vic" must be swept away. In my opinion these two theatres are only at the threshold of their creative activity and they must now be conducted with the utmost courage, faith and enterprise along the lines so well and thoroughly laid by Miss Lilian Baylis.

W. J. TURNER

THE MOVIES

"Un Carnet de Bal." At Studio One.
"Underworld." At the Curzon.
"Monica and Martin." At the Berkeley (also "Spanish Earth.")
"Mademoiselle Docteur." At the London Pavilion (from Monday).
"Ever Since Eve." At the Regal.
"Navy-Blue and Gold." At the Empire.

IN a week of Continental films, *Un Carnet de Bal* easily wins. It seems as though every star who has ever delighted us in other French films has been assembled by Julien Duvivier, the director of *Pépé le Moko* and *Poil de Carotte*. We have Françoise Rosay and Louis Jouvet from *La Kermesse Héroique;* Harry Baur and Pierre Blanchar from *Crime et Châtiment;* the long and melancholy countenance of Fernandel from *The Virtuous Isidore;* Raimu from *Ces Messieurs de la Santé;* and finally Robert Lynen from *Poil de Carotte*, getting quite a big boy now. Everybody knows that no collection of stars, however brilliant, can make a play or a movie out of nothing. Fortunately, the story is good, though, by its very nature, episodical. Christine, married to a husband whom she respects without loving, has lived for twenty years a secluded life in a great house on the shores of an Italian lake. At the age of thirty-six she finds herself a widow, beautiful, wealthy, but alone in the world. Going through old papers after the funeral, she finds an old ball programme. Her first ball, when she was sixteen, the lovely springtime of her life! A series of misty, dissolving shots and the beautiful voice of Marie Bell give a rare touch of poetry to these opening scenes. The programme is full of names: Pierre, Alain, Georges, Gérard; and each one of them, it seems, had fallen madly in love with her on that distant occasion. She decides to search them out, one by one, to see what has become of them, perhaps to make them her friends again. It is, of course, a variant of that fundamentally unsatisfactory recipe that has given us so many novels and plays about unrelated groups of people who meet at dinner parties, in hotels, on derelict ships. On this occasion the discontinuity is partly avoided by the fact of their common love (in the past) for Christine, but in return a slight monotony results. The fault is a small one; both director and players succeed in disguising the inevitable repetitions by the brilliant variety of their treatment of each episode.

To write of each is impossible, but a few deserve special mention. In the first, Christine discovers the mother of Georges, who has killed himself out of disappointed love, pretending with half-insane persistence that her son is still alive: in her house it is always 19th December 1919, Georges is always just about to return. Against the melancholy drone of a hurdy-gurdy outside the window, Françoise Rosay invests this scene with a strange pathos. An interlude of great charm is provided by Harry Baur as a famous musician turned monk, and discovered amid his beloved, unruly choir-boys at Chartres. Most impressive of all is Pierre Blanchar's epileptic doctor, driven by ill-luck and a wretched marriage to the practice of illegal operations in squalid conditions. His hateful, noise-racked room is photographed tilted and askew: a brilliant preparation this for the dreadful climax. By comparison, the comedy scenes of Raimu and Fernandel, though entertaining enough, are conventional. Another lover (Louis Jouvet) runs a dubious night-club, and at first mistakes Christine's purpose in seeking him out; they talk of their youth, of their enthusiasm for Francis Jammes; they quote (alas, misquote) Verlaine's "Colloque Sentimental." That poem sums up the mood of *Un Carnet de Bal*, filled with a sense of the passing of time and the scattering of friends and lovers. In spite of loose ends here and there, it is the most distinguished film sent to us by France for some time.

Jean Renoir's direction of Maxim Gorki's *Underworld* is an attractive piece of work, by turns dramatic and amusing if a little disconnected in its total effect. His presentation of the underworld quarter of a Russian town errs on the easy-going side; it inclines to the picturesque rather than the realistic. Junie Astor's slum girl is not quite convincing; she appears at times to be only slumming. On the other hand, Jean Gabin's hero has a wholly authentic charm, and Louis Jouvet turns up again in his best vein as a down-and-out Baron.

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The firmest portraits are those of Vladimir Sokoloff as the evil old receiver of stolen goods and Suzy Prim as his woman; they are brilliant throughout, and the scenes that lead up to his murder have the force that is elsewhere somewhat dissipated. A movie well worth seeing—if only for the comic scene at the open-air restaurant.

Monica and Martin (" Versprich mir nichts ") is a German picture that might just pass on a wet Sunday in Wernigerode. Transplanted to Berkeley Square, it seems painfully crude; and, it must be added, painfully noisy. It has always been the besetting sin of German actors to roar and shout on the slightest provocation, and now that the whole country spends its time either roaring or being roared at, and has, so to speak, got its ear in, the disease has reached unmanageable proportions. The fable concerns an artist's wife who, for complicated reasons, pretends to have painted her husband's pictures, and in the resulting confusion finds that she has been awarded the Lucas Cranach Prize. It is intended to be highly sophisticated. It is not.

Mademoiselle Docteur is a thoroughly enjoyable spy story, with good performances from Dita Parlo, John Loder and Gyles Isham; English, but neat and efficient. *Ever Since Eve* is a so-so comedy, most notable for the gusto with which Marion Davies escapes from the bondage of blondage into the disguise of a hideous typist; her clowning is first-rate, but even so Patsy Kelly nearly steals the picture from her.

Navy-Blue and Gold (already replaced by *The Last Gangster*) is American patriotic, glorifying life in a naval training college. Such films are not a whit funnier than our own attempts at celluloid flag-waving. Those who saw *Tom Brown at Culver* will know what to expect; the jolly young room-mates, the bullying seniors, the frantic bouts of sport, the old-time bore hanging around the coll. and haranguing the boys about the past. Tom Brown, always *de rigueur* on such occasions, is all present and correct; but where is his old buddy, Richard Cromwell?

PETER GALWAY

On Choosing Books

for yourself and for your friends

The one thing no reader can complain of in these times is lack of variety. Fifteen thousand new books will have appeared before the end of this year, an average of nearly three hundred a week, and perhaps a third will be remembered in six months' time. What can be done about it?

The standard of reviewing in the leading weeklies is high but booksellers *can* supplement the work of the specialist reviewer. Besides their own reading, which is usually fairly wide, they have, as a rule, good reasons for having particular books in their shops—contrary to general opinion, these books are bought outright from the publishers, and a bookseller, after repeated mistakes, comes to sense the more important from the very large number of unnecessary works which appear. But, above all, the bookseller is in daily and continual touch with other readers—he is not, as the reviewer, purely concerned with one week's publications, and he does acquire some sense of proportion.

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PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Wandering Jew," at the Savoy

On Monday the Habima players of the Savoy Theatre gave their first performance of *The Wandering Jew*. It is a remarkable play and bears no relation to the Matheson Lang affair. A prophet appears in the market-place of Birath-Arba to find a child born on the day (A.D. 70) when the Temple at Jerusalem was destroyed. He is maltreated by the suspicious inhabitants, and by the time they are convinced, the child is dead. " What will happen now? " they ask the prophet. " It is God's punishment. I must wander forever from land to land, from country to country, seeking the Messiah." And he begins his journey. If you have got the impression that the Habima players are " representational," that they stand about the stage in postures or are grouped in tableaux with elaborate shadow effects on the scene behind, a visit to the *Wandering Jew* will dispel it. The play seems part church service, part ballet, and part musical comedy, and flows easily from one to the other. The most moving thing in it is the extraordinarily beautiful ritualistic wailing—for the death of the child, for the fall of the temple, and the wonderful acting and singing of Mlle. Rovina as the child's mother. The prophet (Z. Friedland), first misunderstood, then raised to ecstasy by his discovery of the baby Messiah, then cast down again, also gave a fine performance. This play gained on the whole by not being translated. The splendid oriental language in which it was acted and sung kept it free from any hint of bathos, the costumes, sober in colour, dignified in conception, were those of the grave Turks and Jews one sees in old masters, and the performance left one meditating on the permanence of Jewish tradition, and the religious fervour of their art. What were the English doing in A.D. 70? One wonders. It is preceded by a comedy, *Short Friday*, of a Jewish Rabbi who is compelled to break the Sabbath. The action takes place in Russia and somehow the whole play seems more Russian than Jewish. Snow, sleighs, furs, vodka, drinking songs, and peasants—it might be anywhere in old Russia—but then again the scenery (the scenes open like the pages of a book, and there is no stage furniture except a bench) shows a far more adaptable and sophisticated people at work.

"People at Sea," at the Apollo

This play of Mr. J. B. Priestley's was not written in order to score a hat-trick; that it was entrusted first to amateurs is some indication that the author did not rate it high. To have three plays running in the West End at once is an achievement, especially as two of them are far above the average level of the London theatre. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should send a special note of thanks to a dramatist who first of all enables the Treasury to take one-sixth of the turn-over of three theatres in entertainment tax before it sets to work on the creator of this plenty. Mr. Priestley, who is thus building us a battleship, introduces us in *People at Sea* to a derelict vessel with its few relicts of passengers and crew who have survived a fire. The crew, with more sense than one expects, realise that rescue will do them little good: it will merely mean a return to hard labour in bad quarters. Why not, says a tough sailor, bump-off the bourgeois, take what ready money and jewels there are, and get away with these to start a new life? But an amiable professor handles a gun in time and then buries the conspiracy with a " Leftish " funeral ovation on the wrongs of the poor. The result is rather an odd but pretty lively mixture of deeds and discourse. Mr. Priestley can always create characters quickly and vividly and his types of passenger, though conventional specimens of the faded film-star, alcoholic author, English matron, American financier, and so on, live strongly in their convention. The occasional wisps of philosophy about the nature of reality float thinly through a potential melodrama. Mr. Laurence Irving has contributed a nice piece of marine scene-painting, but the cast has not been happily chosen and why Miss Jean Muir should be suddenly translated to starry status is not apparent.

Opera at Covent Garden

The short popular opera season which opened at Covent Garden this week deserves the support of music-lovers. The company is an English one, with English conductors, and the operas are being sung in English—with the exception of *La Bohème*; in this case the Italian words are too closely associated with the music to be abandoned. This, incidentally, provides a striking proof that the public would soon get used to operas being given in the language they were written in if they had sufficient chance to become thoroughly familiar with them. That this is the desirable ideal is unquestionable, for nearly every opera loses by translation

into a foreign tongue for which the music was not composed. The operas which lose least are those like *Hansel and Gretel*, which is more of a musical drama than an opera. This English company is fairly strong on its singing side, and the operas are well produced and rehearsed, but the chief defect of our native operatic artists is the weakness of their acting. The repertory is well chosen; next week, for example, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *The Barber of Seville* and *La Bohème* are all being given.

Water-Colours by Cézanne, "The Thames, 1907," by Derain, Paintings by Guy Marson, Caricatures by Vicky. At the Lefevre Galleries.

Though one knew what to expect, the water-colours by Cézanne are astonishingly lovely. Of the twenty-one here, at least a dozen are very late, several of them are of Cézanne's last view of the mountain—triangular as a shark's fin. Cézanne obviously liked water-colour for its quick-drying qualities; he used it with the same elaborate deliberation as oil. In a magnificent mountainous landscape he realises to an extraordinary degree the planes, the underlying structure of the scene. Cézanne's simplification is in fact an insistence on essentials; his taut drawing constructs first a world the crust of which is hard and tight like an apple's skin, and imposes the foliage, the secondary complications after. The Derain paintings of the Thames were done in 1907, a year after Cézanne's death, with Fauvism well on its ruddy career. The conversion of London's dingy green, silver grey buff and black into terms of red Provençal earth is a triumph of style over anything else. Though these pictures have more interest than Derain's later work, they contain the beginnings of much disembodied eclecticism to come. Mr. Guy Marson's painting is in the nature of a travelogue. Mr. Marson has collected pictorial records of Bavaria, Tangier, Wales, Weymouth, Provence, Spain, Paris and Bayonne. The variety is almost bewildering, the pictures themselves are not vulgar, not ugly, not unpleasant and not without charm. "Vicky," a caricaturist, formerly of Berlin and now of London, is showing sixty well-chosen celebrities.

Surrealist Objects at the London Gallery.

Here are objects in great diversity—almost as at the Caledonian Market. Carefully selected antithesis and juxtaposition hardly produces the effect of grim accident that is to be seen every Tuesday and Friday on the market's grimy cobblestones. These objects have the look of hothouse weeds, enervated by their own exoticism—they are a Marie Antoinette version of junk piles. Like the fancy Valentines, the keepsakes, the forget-me-nots, they have a sort of extravagant artificiality. Confronted by an upholstered wheelbarrow one is struck less by the strangeness of the idea than by the neatness of the workmanship, less by the fantastic implications than by the extravagance of energy and even cash. It is pleasant to find that even in these busy days there are still people who find time to be laboriously and charmingly futile. Surrealism as it is seen here is a nice form of Victorian revival. For really grisly objects we must still refer to the Caledonian market.

Opening of the New Unity Theatre

The new building of the Unity Theatre Club in Goldington Street is in itself a very considerable achievement. It has been built in record time by the voluntary labour of worker and technician members of the Club. It is a good, modern, business-like looking piece of architecture, comfortable, efficient and thoroughly equipped. It has a cyclorama, a movable apron and a fine battery of lights. And it is also fitted out for films. It was formally opened by Mr. Victor Gollancz, who said that "culture has become a working-class preserve." Mr. Henry Hodge of *Where's That Bomb?* also spoke, and begged Unity not to become respectable. The London Labour Choral Union sang several times under the direction of Alan Bush and others. The Workers' Propaganda Dance Group did a Spanish ballet. Paul Robeson sang negro songs of protest to a wildly enthusiastic audience, telling them that "they were going to see plenty of him from now on." And the evening ended with an admirably taut production of *Waiting for Lefty*, by Clifford Odets. This new theatre is capable of playing a part in theatrical history. Great subjects do not always make great plays, and thesis drama can be poorer theatre than musical comedy; but it is surely time that London audiences tired of their regular diet of marzipan. It is good to know that here is one theatre at least from which reality will not be excluded by the magic words "No box-office appeal."

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, December 3rd—
- Thorold Dickinson on "The Soviet Film To-day," Conway Hall, 8.15.
- Dr. Pryns Hopkins on "Why there are Sects," Caxton Hall, 8.30.

SATURDAY, December 4th—
- Dick Sheppard Memorial Fund, Public Meeting, Royal Albert Hall, 7.45. Tickets (free) from P.P.U., 96 Regent Street.
- Richard Church on "The Speaking of Poetry," Royal Institution, 3, and on Dec. 11 and 18.

SUNDAY, December 5th—
- Herbert Read on "The Myth, the Dream and the Poem," Conway Hall, 11.
- Frank Baker on "Prison Reform," 35 Gordon Square, 4.
- Two Soviet Films: "Circus" and "Jubilant Youth," Cambridge Theatre, 6 and 8.30. Tickets from F.S.U., 5 Gt. Ormond St.
- John Barclay on "Why I Will Not Fight for Capitalism or Democracy," 86 Rochester Row, 8.
- J. F. Horrabin on "Education—Capitalist and Socialist," Willoughby Hall, Hampstead, 8.

TUESDAY, December 7th—
- Dr. Ida Sindelkova on "Czechoslovakia's Place in European Affairs," Friends House, 1.20.
- "The Trojan Women," Adelphi, 3. On behalf of L.N.U.
- Rugby Football: Oxford *v.* Cambridge, Twickenham.
- H. Wickham Steed on "The Risks of Peace," Conway Hall, 7.
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "The United States," Morley College, 8.
- Third Spanish Concert organised in aid of Refugees from Northern Spain and Medical Supplies. Scala Theatre, 8.
- Len Lye on his Work. London Film Institute Soc., Gaumont Private Theatre, Wardour Street, 8.15.
- "The Worm that Turned," Embassy.

WEDNESDAY, December 8th—
- "The Valkyrie," Sadler's Wells.
- "Oh! You Letty," Palace.

THURSDAY, December 9th—
- Pasionaria Birthday Meeting to send sympathy of British women and men to people of Spain. Speakers include: Ellen Wilkinson, Rebecca West, Isabel Brown and Charlotte Haldane, Friends' House, 8.
- Special Matinee in aid of Q Camps, "The Wooing of Anne Hathaway," Wyndhams.
- Canon Charles Raven on "Christianity and Its Relation to the Totalitarian State," Bethnal Green Public Library, 8.30.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

JUST as a plant can live in rocky ground, or with its roots matted to fit a penny flower-pot, so a child can extract the last grain of spiritual nourishment from very meagre sources. You can't easily starve a child's imagination by withholding books; you only interfere with its opportunities of knowledge, emotional experience and a wide outlook on the world. Children suffer from grown-ups forcing books on them for which they are not ready, or which they dislike. The best thing is to leave a lot of books lying around; if its parents value books the child will soon take to reading. Books make good Christmas presents, and the best way of choosing them, I think, is not to consider the child's age so much as its interests. *Choosing Books for Children*, by May Lamberton Becker (Oxford, 3*s.* 6*d.*), is an attempt to deal with the problem by the writer of the page on children's books in the *New York Herald Tribune Supplement Books*. Mrs. Becker has the subject at her fingers' ends, but she leaves out a lot of very good books, puts in a lot of second-rate ones and doesn't discuss some of the chief problems. For example, *Little Red Riding Hood* is one of the most famous stories for children. Why? Has any child ever liked the notion of finding a wolf's face where it expected to see Granny's? Or is it simply popular because grown-ups love producing a terrific effect on juvenile audiences, and *Little Red Riding Hood* is shattering? When the child is older, instead of being frightened with a wolf grandmother, the child is embarrassed by grown-up descriptions of its make-believe imaginative life. I can remember Barrie's sentimentality having as chilling an effect on me as ridicule. Writers for children are apt to forget that children don't like being small and physically weak, and unable to take care of themselves, any more than negroes like an inferior position. Popularity is most easily achieved by siding with them against their parents.

> M was a dish of mince
> It looked so nice to eat!
> Papa, he quickly ate it up,
> And said: "This is a treat!"
> N was a Nut that grew
> High up upon a tree
> Papa, who could not reach it, said:
> "That's much too high for me!"

But of course the authors of children's books cannot afford to offend parents. Papa does not want attention called to his feats with the mince, and Mamma rather likes the pernicious books which tell children they are sweet little things. When they are four they ought to want to be five.

* * *

Mrs. Becker has a great love for the Milne books: *Christopher Robin* and *Winnie the Pooh*. She recommends Kingsley's *Waterbabies* (a hated work) and leaves out his glorious *The Heroes*. She writes with genuine feeling of *The Jungle Book*: She leaves out De La Mare's *Three Mulla Mulgars*, and all the American Animal Books which meant such a lot to me; of which William J. Long is perhaps the best, but Ernest Thompson Seton must be remembered for *Two Little Savages* as well as for *Wild Animals I Have Known*, etc. *Bevis*, by Richard Jefferies, is included, but not *The Amateur Poacher* or *After London*. None of William Morris's tapestry romances are mentioned, yet *The Roots of the Mountains*, *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* were wholly absorbing at ten. She puts in Lowell Thomas's *Boy's Life of Colonel Lawrence* and P. C. Wren's *Beau Geste*, both of which I should leave out, and forgets a number of very good books: E. V. Lucas's *Children's Book of Verse*, Miss Edgeworth's *Parent's Assistant*, Masefield's *The Box of Delights*, Thackeray's *Rose and the Ring*. Mayne Reid is not mentioned, nor Rider Haggard, nor Catlin's Indians, nor Captain Marryat, nor Frank Morley's *East South East*.

She leaves out books of travel. *Herodotus*, *Marco Polo*, *Waterton's Travels in South America*, *The Cruise of the Beagle*, *Captain Cook's Voyages*, *Trelawney's Adventures of a Younger Son*, *Whymper's Scrambles Among the Alps*, *My Life as an Indian*, *The Discovery of the Great North-West*; all these were prized when I was a boy. To these I should add an admirable book called *Unrolling the Map*, a history of exploration, very well told. She includes *Moby Dick*, which most boys find troublesome because of the exaggerated style, and leaves out *Omoo* and *Typee*. She refers to *Huckleberry Finn* vaguely, but does not include it on her list. My complaint against Mrs. Becker's book is that it is too much occupied by modern English books of a whimsical character, and that she leaves out the older writers and is unfair to her own countrymen. I was reading Stephen Crane for the sake of the occasional cowboys and six-shooters at a very early age. I think it is also a mistake to recommend translations of such books as *Les Malheurs de Sophie*. Children ought to start French young, and a list of French books which should be available only in the original should be given. I suggest *Macao et Cosmage*, the Boutet de Monvel picture books, *Sans Famille*, Erckmann-Chatrian and Dumas. There should be a *Petit Larousse* also available for the nursery. I disagree with Mrs. Becker over more than the mere choice of books. In discussing censorship, she says:

> It is not fair to children, at any time in the growing-up process, to subject them to the strain of vicarious emotion, or to give them views of life strongly coloured by adult experience before they could have any experience of their own with the life so described.

If they are not to feel vicarious emotion, they had better not learn to read, and if one must conceal that one's views of life are coloured by adult experience, what honest relationship can one have with children? I remember being thrilled by Duse in *La Dame aux Camelias* at eleven, and I was by no means a precocious child.

* * *

Mrs. Becker and I agree with all children in liking Arthur Ransome's books, and the latest addition, *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea* (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*), is I think the most exciting of the whole *Swallows* and *Amazon* series. The weakness of contemporary children's books is that the characters in them are almost always polite, rational and well-behaved citizens of a sensibly managed world. Strangely enough, this false picture is the work of a generation of violent rebels, who defied Victorian conventions and morality. Why don't they ever represent the grown-up world in its true light—with human children having to fight for their own hand? *Bevis* stands out because the boys are real, not naughty nor inhuman, and living in their own detached world. Ransome's chief fault is that he supports the washy pretence that parents and children are never at odds. Jefferies knew better, and Bevis and Mark have ten times the life of any of the Swallows. Mr. Ransome's other fault has been that Titty's dream world borders on the embarrassing. But his tremendous merit is that he has a passionate interest in explaining how to do things that children want to do, and knows exactly how failures occur. The Swallows' mother, Mrs. Walker, is frankly a blot; but in this book a glorious series of accidents sends the Swallows drifting out into the North Sea alone in a thick fog, in a well-found little cutter. There they are, faced by an emergency, and they act as any brave and intelligent children who know something about sailing would behave if they were not too seasick. Every detail in the night of sailing, with its dangers and thrills and fatigues, is splendidly told and completely convincing. The only weakness comes when they find themselves in Flushing Harbour and Commander Walker spots them from the Harwich boat. Some miraculous intervention is, however, essential at that moment unless the book is to have a tame finish, and Mr. Ransome's solution is probably the best. My tip to parents is to give *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea* and then to follow it up, on the first available birthday, with *Racundra's First Cruise*, which describes Mr. Ransome's own adventures sailing among the islands of the Baltic. There are no weak spots in that, and children love it.

DAVID GARNETT

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Offenbach and the Paris of his Time. By S. KRACAUER. Translated by GWENDA DAVID and ERIC MOSBACHER. *Constable.* 18*s.*

My Life and Friends. By EDWARD SPEYER. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

"The Parisian Aristophanes": that was what Max Nordau called him. Lucian, at first glance, might seem more nearly akin to the irreverent creator of *Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Belle Helène;* but no doubt Nordau had in mind the poetic feeling that is always liable to raise its head amid the most outrageous absurdities and extravagances of his operettas. There was another phrase—the graceful if somewhat excessive tribute of Rossini—which remembered the lyricism as well as the sparkle of Offenbach: "the Mozart of the Champs Elysées." No matter how qualified, Mozart's was an ambitious name to drag in; but Offenbach caught so precisely the spirit of the Second Empire, and set it to music of such wit and invention that it was inevitable that he should be overpraised by his contemporaries. In revenge, he is perhaps underpraised now. A recent London revival of *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* suffered from an unimaginatively adapted libretto: General Boum, once as topical as Colonel Blimp, proved to be stone dead in 1937. But how the music bubbled and winked, curvetted and pranced! The world is not so full of gaiety that we can afford to do without these witty ensembles, delicious polkas, exhilarating galops. Bold and tactful adaptation has succeeded before, and will succeed again; but someone must also do for Offenbach what Respighi did for Rossini—hunt through all the lesser operettas and the *bouffonneries* for hidden jewels. And then—why not an Offenbach ballet, with scenery after Constantin Guys?

The difficulties of adapting Offenbach to the contemporary stage are not, however, Herr Kracauer's concern; he attempts neither detailed consideration of the music nor intimate presentation of the man. But what he sets out to do he does very well: it is to paint a picture of the social background that developed and explains his particular genius. We begin with Paris in Louis Philippe's time: the crazy street carnivals, the still young Jockey Club, the Café Tortoni, the dandies, the boulevards. During the revolution of 1848 the German Jew took refuge for the moment in his native land; and we catch incongruous glimpses of the inveterate *boulevardier* composing a *Song of the German Boys* full of "insufferable military pathos," and even playing upon his 'cello, at the six hundredth anniversary of the foundation of Cologne Cathedral—what? His fantasia from the works of Rossini! Back in Paris, he "floated like a cork" (Herr Kracauer's excellent phrase) on the waters of the Second Empire. He found himself, and the public found him. Political reaction, the abolition of universal suffrage and liberty of the Press, the increasing isolation of the bourgeoisie—everywhere could be discerned a flight from reality, coupled with a reckless pursuit of amusement. No soil could better have suited that flippant, effervescent spirit. It is difficult to exaggerate his success; not only Paris, but the world was intoxicated. Everybody who found his way into the tiny "Bouffes" acknowledged his genius; even Tolstoy. The composer worked with extreme rapidity, like a journalist; Saint-Saëns remarked that his scores swarmed with microscopic little notes, like flies' feet, which sometimes barely managed to touch the paper.

His choice of librettos had, according to Herr Kracauer, far-reaching political and social implications; certainly the Jupiter and the jealous Juno of his *Orphée* glance at Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie. Perhaps, however, the author presses these allusions too far; in this he reminds me at times of Bernard Shaw's *Perfect Wagnerite.* Sarcey's description of the celebrated can-can in *Orphée* probably says as much as can be said with any certainty:

> Did it not seem as though at the first sound of this delirious orchestra the whole society suddenly sprang into being and dashed madly into the midst of the dancers? This music would be enough to awaken the dead . . .
>
> At the first stroke of the bow which set the gods of Olympus and the underworld in motion it seemed as though the whole throng were seized with a mighty impulse, and as though the whole century, with its governments, institutions, customs and laws, were plunged into the whirl of a tremendous, all-embracing saraband.

Observe, by the way, that Sarcey shows himself no musician by his choice of the stately saraband to describe this riotous bacchanal. It is, perhaps, a defect of his well-written and thoroughly interesting study that Herr Kracauer, too, is not much of a musician. He speaks of the Giulietta episode as the *last* act of *The Tales of Hoffmann,* and treats Johann Strauss' enchanting *Fledermaus* as no more than a deft imitation of Offenbachian rhythms. It is that, but much more as well.

In the eighteenth century the same composers were accustomed to supply light and serious music. By the close of the nineteenth century, the divorce between the two genres was complete. To-day efforts are made on both sides (Walton, Ellington, Ravel) to bridge the gulf; how wide and how deep it has become we may see by comparing Speyer's book with Kracauer's. Edward Speyer was born in 1839, only twenty years after Offenbach: like him he was a cosmopolitan German Jew and immensely sociable; from his dictated and posthumous reminiscences a picture emerges of a delightful man and a passionate and intelligent lover of music. But scarcely a single name is common to both books. Speyer was an intimate of the Clara Schumann-Brahms-Joachim circle; and broadminded enough to be admitted also to the friendship of the Bayreuthians. Though he knew every serious musician of importance until his death at the age of 95, his book cannot honestly be said to contribute much to our knowledge or amusement; but his good judgment and memory make it agreeable reading for people like myself who love unimportant musical gossip. I am interested, for example, to learn that Brahms would sometimes accompany his own songs at public concerts in the most careless and slovenly manner; but if you ask me why, I have no answer. It must be confessed, however, that the clumsy Brahmsian practical jokes and the whole cosy, stuffy atmosphere ("we spent a most interesting evening discussing all sorts of subjects, and it was one o'clock when we left with Levi") seem intolerably flat and provincial after the sparkle of Paris. Siegfried Wagner, we read, "regularly attended our Sunday evenings, when he entered with much zest into all the fun and showed great agility dressed up as a *prima ballerina.*" That represents about the utmost limit of *Kleinstadt* abandon; and somehow one doubts whether the Boulevard would have found it very amusing.

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THE LANDSCAPE

THE face of the landscape is a mask
Of bone and iron lines where time
Has ploughed its character.
I look and look to read a sign
Through errors of light and eyes of water
Beneath the land's will, of a fear
And the memory of a struggle,
As man beneath his mask still wears a child.

STEPHEN SPENDER

I JUST LOVE DOGS

WELL, said my friend from Vancouver, one Saturday I had lunch at the Club, *you* know, the Ladies' Club. I was leaving, and had just turned the corner of Oxford Avenue, going down to Centre Street (that's our principal business street), and there, right out on the sidewalk beside the bank building, on the corner of Oxford and Centre, but up Oxford a bit, lay the body of an enormous yellow-haired collie, apparently very old, and it was all stiff-looking. A beautiful dead dog.

There was no one near but an old lady with a string bag and little parcels, and she was poking the dog with her walking-stick, and saying, Poor dog, poor dog, what a shame to leave it here. And I felt just the same, and I said, Oh, dear, the poor dog, what can we do? And she said, I don't know, dearie, but someone ought to get the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Oh, yes, I said, someone ought to telephone Inspector Snape at once. (I wanted her to know that I knew about the S.P.C.A. too, and who was the head of it, and everything.) The old lady said quite simply, Inspector Snape is dead, he has been dead for over six months. I felt rather taken aback, because I'd been so pleased about knowing about Inspector Snape, but I said, Oh, well, it's no good telephoning Inspector Snape. All this time the old lady kept on poking the dog in different parts, but he never stirred. We felt just terrible, he was such a lovely dog.

Then the old lady said, Inspector Perkins, he's the new man. And I said, Oh, yes, someone ought to telephone Inspector Perkins then, and the old lady said, Well, dearie, *I'd* go and telephone Inspector Perkins in a minute, only my husband is sick in bed, has been for three days. He gets these attacks, so I don't think I'd better telephone Inspector Perkins. Couldn't you do that, dearie? I was just trying to work that out in my head, when a lady came up in a purple velvet hat. Oh, she said, look at the poor dog! Isn't that dreadful, and such a lovely dog too. My, she said, I just love dogs. I'm crazy about dogs. I like dogs a whole lot better than I like people. The old lady with the string bag and I said, yes, indeed, we did too, and I think we all felt a bit better after that. But, there lay the dog, all stiff.

This is terrible, said the lady in the purple hat, this beautiful dog lying here dead, and nobody doing *one thing*. And she looked round at me and at the old lady with the string bag, who kept on prodding the dog's ear with her walking-stick. I don't know why she kept on doing that.

So I said, yes, indeed, it was terrible, and someone ought to telephone the S.P.C.A. So the lady in the purple hat looked very stern and very practical, and said yes, that someone ought to telephone Inspector Snape at once. So the old lady and I said, both speaking together, but Inspector Snape is dead, he has been dead for over six months. The lady in the purple hat seemed a little taken aback by this. But, we said, there is Inspector Perkins, and she said, Oh, well then, we must telephone Inspector Perkins at once.

Well, dearie, said the old lady, who was still prodding the body of the dog, and he certainly was a *lovely* dog, *I'd* go, only I don't feel that I can. I'd go in a minute, she said, only my husband is sick in bed. He has been for three days, and I think if you and this young lady (she meant me) went, it would be nice.

Just then some young men came up, and they said, Gosh, look at the dead dog, but they didn't seem to mean to do anything about it. They just stood and looked at the body of the dog. That seemed to make the lady in the purple hat very, very angry, and she said, well, anyway *I* am going to telephone Inspector Perkins, and I said, I will go too. Let us go together, I said, let us go across to the Supreme Drug Store and telephone Inspector Perkins on the pay 'phone. And the old lady said, yes, do, dearie, and I will stay here with the dog.

So the lady in the purple hat and I went across the road to the Supreme Drug Store, and left the old lady and the young men standing beside the dog. The old lady was still poking it here and there with her stick, and she seemed by this time to be sort of owning the dog, and in a way, I suppose, it was her dog, as she'd found it first. And the crowd was growing round the dog, and people were saying, oh, what a pity, what a beautiful dog, why doesn't someone do something?

But the lady in the purple hat and I felt, I think, that we were the kind of people who really *do* things, though I'm sure I wouldn't have known what to do if it hadn't been for her. Well, we hurried across the street to the Supreme Drug Store, and all the way she kept saying how fond she was of dogs, and I said I was, too. And she said she loved *her* dog far better than she loved most human beings. In fact, she loved her dog far, far better than she loved her older brother, and I tried to think of something equally strong to say, only we haven't got a dog, and by the time we reached the pay 'phone in the Supreme Drug, you'd think we both hated the whole human race, and thought dogs should be in parliament.

Anyway, I am shy about speaking to strangers, very shy, even on the telephone, so I said, please do let me give you this nickel, and then you can speak to Inspector Snape—no—Perkins. And she said, oh no, I wouldn't think of it, and I said, no really, you must. So by the time we had talked about the nickel quite a bit, she put my nickel in the pay 'phone, and got Inspector Perkins' office. He wasn't at his office, this being Saturday. So I found another nickel, and she got his house, and he was away for the week-end, and so was Mrs. Perkins, the maid said.

She was very, very angry at this, and I felt quite angry too, and the lady in the purple hat said it was an outrage, and what was to prevent a valuable dog from dying on a Saturday afternoon, and there was the head of the S.P.C.A. away for the week-end. So I said it was an outrage too, and whatever should we do?

So she said, I'm going straight up Centre Street, two blocks, till I come to the traffic policeman, and I'm going to bring him right down here, whether he wants to or not, and see that

something is done about this, and right away too. She was very, very angry. Yes do, I said, because I knew I would never sound angry enough to make any traffic policeman leave his place, I should just make it sound silly, so I said, yes, do, and I will go back to the dog.

By this time the lady in the purple hat and I were feeling very important, only she was feeling more important than I was, because I can never manage to feel as important as other people, although I *do* try, and she set off, her eyes flashing, and round the corner and up Centre Street, which was very, very crowded, and I went back across to the dog.

When I arrived back at the dog a large crowd had gathered, and the old lady with the string bag was giving a kind of lecture to all the people, and poking with her stick, and when she saw me coming, she pointed at me with her stick, and all the people turned and looked at me, and I still tried to feel important. But when all the people looked at me, I stopped feeling important at once and blushed and explained about the lady in the purple hat going for the policeman, and all the people said, oh, what a good thing, and what a valuable dog, and wasn't it too bad!

Just at that moment I heard the queerest whistle, you know, the kind of whistle that families have, and boys, like a signal it was. Well, it was a special kind of whistle, like that, and done twice. We all turned and looked, and there, driving up Oxford Avenue from Centre Street was a large limousine, driven by a young man, and the back door was open. The young man drove slower and slower, as he reached the crowd, and at the same moment as the young man whistled the second time, the dog sprang to its feet and wagged its tail—my, he had a marvellous tail—and shot through the crowd and into the car. And the boy slammed the door and drove quickly away. The car had an Oklahoma license. Everyone was too astonished to speak. It was the queerest feeling. A minute ago there had been the dog dead, as you might say, and us all bound together, feeling very important, and very sorry about the dog, and the next minute there was the dog alive and gone, and us all feeling pretty silly.

Well, I hadn't time but to think how funny it all was, and I turned to speak to the old lady with the string bag. But she was away up Oxford Avenue, walking very fast with her stick. And all the crowd just wasn't there, and where the dog had been was nothing, and there was just me. And I looked quickly towards Centre Street to see if the lady with the purple hat was coming, very angry, with the policeman, and perhaps the policeman very angry too, and I couldn't see her in the crowds of people walking up and down Centre Street. So I went very quickly to where my car was parked and drove home.

And when I told my husband that evening, all he said was for me to cultivate that dog's disposition. He said that dog had fine qualities. But I didn't get over feeling mean for days. And then, when I stopped feeling mean, I was so mad at myself that I hadn't even gone into a store and watched for the lady in the purple hat and the policeman. But even then I wouldn't have heard what they said. ETHEL WILSON

DRESS

English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century. By C. WILLETT CUNNINGTON. *Faber.* £3 3*s.*

Dress has never been at all a straightforward business: so much subterranean interest and complex feeling attaches to it. As a topic, it is popular because it is dangerous—it has a flowery head but deep roots in the passions. On the subject of dress almost no one, for one or another reason, feels truly indifferent: if their own clothes do not concern them, somebody else's do. In talk, this is an area of floating mines—tabus, *idées fixes*, snobberies, unadmitted frustrations. Ten minutes talk about clothes (except between perfect friends) tends to make everyone present either overbearing, guarded or touchy. The specialist speaks his own language, and gives nothing away; the intolerable person takes what he takes to be the informed view; while those who believe indirect aspersions are being cast on their own way of dressing retreat into hurt silence. This apparently frivolous topic has led to much ill-feeling—love, food, politics, art or money are all very much safer. Clothes never remain a question of pure aesthetics; far too much personal feeling is involved in them. They play such an intimate part in the delicate business of getting oneself across that it seems impossible to discuss them, for long, objectively.

In theory, dress is an art. The architecture of textiles ought to rank only less high than the architecture of stone in so far as textiles are less durable—also, of course, the form created in textiles is less civic in purpose and less widely beheld. The great *couturiers* hold, and do impose on their clients, the great, abstract and architectural view. In their French houses the approach to dress is chastened and impersonal: where dress *is* an art, not only the stuff but the body become the art's matter. This approach to dress on the part of the wearer implies a sort of discipline—personal fads and sentiments have to be overcome: unself-consciousness, loftiness are put on with the great dress. But this discipline, or release from a range of petty obsessions, is, unhappily, in nine out of ten cases, one of those good things that only money can buy. The great designer should and must be deferred to—but one buys the right to defer at a pretty substantial price. Fail to command this price, and dress drops at once from the psychological altitude: you are thrown back among your anxieties, your fixations, your will-o'-the-wispish personal fantasies, and are more than apt to be tricked by your false view of yourself. With most people of moderate income, bad, or at least uneasy, tentative dressing is the result of being delivered into their own hands. An unsuccessful appearance is more than a pity: it is a pathological document.

The artist, of any kind, is a person enough disengaged from his own personality to be able to objectify himself or it. Dressing is the one art the unqualified must practise. To present an appearance, a whole, that shall be not only pleasing but significant (which is, after all, the aim, however imperfectly realised, of the woman buying a hat or man buying a tie) is at least as difficult technically, requires as close a grip by the imagination, as disabused an attitude, as the writing of a book that should be fit to be published, or the painting of a picture that is to be seen. In the other arts, something relentless divides the aspirant from the professional: in dress, the aspirant is constantly on the streets. Consciousness of the failure of an effect to which the whole nature lent itself (or which, at least, it obstructed in the best of faith) makes many faces discouraged or evasive. Determination to brazen the thing out gives many faces an air of solid, piglike defiance.

Does fashion help? Such-and-such is worn this year; such-and-such ought to be "safe." Yes, fashion does give a line—but only a general one. It gives a general bent to the aspirations. And nothing is more restful than conformity. But fashion seems to exist for an abstract person who is not you or me. The complaint of non-combatants, the elderly and the old, is that everyone, nowadays, looks exactly the same as everyone else. The truth, probably, is, that everybody would like to look like one preconceived person, a figure suggested to them by the propaganda of fashion: they believe the figure to be their private ideal and do not realise how general the figure is. Stenographers with good figures, quick eyes and uncomplex natures approximate to this ideal most nearly. More pretentious or more difficult people are torn between the desire to express themselves (through fashion) and the hope of assuming, in fashion, an effective disguise. Exhibitionism and a nervous wish for concealment, for anonymity, thus battle inside the buyer of any piece of clothing. There is also the element of fetichism: certain colours, textures or objects exercise an unholy fascination that reason cannot combat, economy cannot check. Is the magnetic object a symbol? One cannot say. By departing at all widely from the current fashion, we are likely to give our fantasies unlimited play.

Even fanciful dressing follows its own order—or conforms, shall we say, to its own ruling obsession. The woman who decides to override fashion, "to be her own fashion," as she expresses it, and looks year in, year out like a high altar, a Siennese angel, a Watteau, an artist's mistress in *Punch* or a person who breeds dogs, is relentlessly driven through her London shopping by the exactions of her particular whim. Her reward is small: among ordinary people the fanciful dresser is generally avoided, as likely to be either tendentious or fey. Overt self-dramatisation is both dull and embarrassing: most of us agree to observe a certain caution in this.

Generally, up to a point, we are prone to accept fashion. We

Christmas **PETER DAVIES** Suggestions

General

THE GREENWOOD HAT by *J. M. Barrie.* To be published for the first time on Nov. 29th, *The Greenwood Hat* is all there will ever be of *J. M. Barrie's* autobiography. With a number of very interesting illustrations. 8/6.

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Among the latest and best novels are A. W. Smith's epic of the British Army in peace time and India, *The Sword and the Rose,* 8/6, Sarah Campion's "vitally significant" *Thirty Million Gas Masks,* 7/6, and Kenneth Matthews' "delightful" *Celia Employed,* 7/6.

30, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2

treat with it, and like to believe that we let it qualify our own personal taste (or fancy) to just the becoming degree. The middle reaches of England, the middle-classes, are the stronghold of free-conventional, in fact of compromise, dressing. We consider the *mondaine* slavish; actually, we find her frigid. Pure style in clothes is as intimidating as pure style in anything else. "Keep an eye on the fashion, dear, but always know your own type. Don't ever look unnatural. If you can't wear a hard fashion, soften it off: a bow or a bunch of flowers will do wonders." This has been the general line. We are not ones for effrontery. (Or, at least, we *were* not, until we saw it in play. Hollywood, within the last twenty years, has imposed itself more widely on English dress than Paris has in centuries. American clothes speak a more emotional language. The Hollywood type has stamped herself everywhere; she is found in remote villages, in Ireland, in Italy. She is one more great leveller.) We have also the tendency to oppose fashion, as something arbitrary. We are so romantic, so Protestant, that we each believe our own personal taste (or fancy) to be unique, independent, perhaps divinely implanted. Whereas fashion appears *outside*, coercive, *voulu*.

But the fact is (as Mr. Willett Cunnington shows in his Preface to *English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*, and continues to show throughout his analysis) that fashion is not an order but a response. A new fashion is something *we* have precipitated, unconsciously. It is the fruit of fancies, tendencies, wishes, reactions to events that are our own, but that we do not recognise when we see them expressed in hats, dresses, "accessories." We take, more than we own, to new fashions *because* we have preconceived them. Fashion expresses us more truly (sometimes, to the eye of posterity, more cruelly) than we can, by individual effort, express ourselves. As individuals, we hardly exist at all; as unique beings we are very little effective. Any force that we exercise is a mass force. It is the general part of us—foggy and unrealised—that is powerful, that precipitates events, and with events, fashions. In a new season's hat or the new cut of a dress we have our unrealised tendencies served up cold. We may think we will or will not follow fashion, but fashion has been closely following us. We are first gently interpreted, then travestied. . . . Holding this view, Mr. Willett Cunnington has seen the history of the English nineteenth century as written in fashion jargon, depicted in fashion plates.

His work has been both meticulous and imaginative. He has given each decade a reasoned interpretation. He groups fashions under the Vertical (or Classic) and the Gothic. About the significance of the changing line there is, as he shows it, something fateful and sinister. The licentious gay days, in which women plastered themselves into wet dresses, passed only too early, like a pretty dawn. After that began the monstrous swell of the skirt, and women were dog-toothed over like church porches. High tiered hats like pagodas, and a fine triangular, rigged effect of the figure went out with Victoria, whose youthful accession brought in the girlish droop. This gave place to a gorgeous, embattled, suggestive modesty. (Mr. Willett Cunnington shows how sexual taste governs fashion.) The skirt reached its greatest circumference just past the mid-century. Woman then reached her height as one kind of woman—select, immobile, fertile. Then the Grecian Bend cleft the line of the back profile, and tilted the bust. The tie-back (an exhibitionist fashion) followed. Aestheticism made felt its sickly presences; emancipation began to blow rather cold. Women, by bursting out of tailor-mades, grasping handlebars, looking pop-eyed under sailor hats, advised the world that their interests were other than purely sexual. Harsh ridges appeared along the hip-line.

Aniline dyes produced a revolution in colour, and the sewing machine made mass-production possible. The taking-off of the paper tax made for the wide circulation of fashion journals. Thus the mode began to lose its esoteric mystery, and to go more quickly down in the world. Soon the proletariat dressed, instead of clothing itself. The Empress Eugènie's shadow grew very long, then diminished. Wars, reforms and literary revivals made themselves felt in hats. . . . Mr. Willett Cunnington proposes to cover, in a further volume, the few but important decades of *this* century. It is to be hoped he will do so. His method and manner are excellent. This present book of his is generously illustrated with coloured plates of dresses in his own collection, clear line-drawings and contemporary fashion plates. He appends a glossary of materials, also a glossary of technical terms. This is a specialist's book with a hold on the common reader. It is large (and handsome), but should be read as well as looked at: it exercises a sort of charnel charm.

ELIZABETH BOWEN

THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night. Rendered into English from the literal and complete translation of DR. J. C. MARDRUS, by POWYS MATHERS. *Routledge.* 4 vols. £4 4s.

Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights. Edited and arranged by E. DIXON. Illustrated by JOHN D. BATTEN. *Dent.* 3s. 6d.

"Divan" means a couch and also a reckoning, a council of state, a series of tales or poems. *The Thousand Nights and One Night* is a huge divan, and it is all these things. What other entertainment, begun in childhood, will follow us so into old age? (The Bible, to which we attach guilt, belongs in another category.) A first dip provides the fairy tales, unsurpassed of their kind; another dip brings up ribaldry, more luxuriant than Rabelais', and daintier; a third unrolls a whole civilisation which the traveller in the back streets of Cairo or Bagdad will find scarcely altered to-day. The book for a lifetime certainly, but to grasp it, at least once in our lives we should be able to read it straight through. An illness, not too alarming, which keeps us some weeks in bed, would make a perfect setting. The bedroom predisposes to the framework of the stories—Scheherazade reclining at the elbow of her king and telling on till dawn; our own nights, touched by fever, are already divided each into a thousand and one, and the story-within-story of her recital is multiplied by dreams. The luxury of being idle—what an echo it receives here! Sex, travel, laughter, gossip, good living, miraculous adventure, all are gigantically enlarged. Read 'twixt sleeping and waking, the book, I can see, would gain in unity, in fantasy, and steepness of detail. I reserve it for my future illness; meanwhile I have read, I suppose, in odd moments, about a third of it. My impressions are scattered.

The favourites—Sinbad, Ali Baba, etc.—again enchant. Sinbad, indeed, for me outweighs all other travel adventure I have read; Odysseus, Robinson Crusoe, Munchausen might have stayed at home for all I care. Do I forget the famous footprint in the sand? No; but it was the only thrill in an otherwise flat book. A dozen scenes of Sinbad flashed into my mind when I began re-reading the First Voyage: Sinbad binding himself with his turban to the roc's leg; the Old Man of the Sea jumping on a stranger's back and locking himself there till his victim died; the merchants dangling hunks of meat into the valley of the diamonds; the black cyclops who, after being blinded, threw rocks at the departing ship; burial alive; the island which was a whale; the men of Sarandit who flew in the Spring. These scenes, when I came to them, were as dramatic and astonishing as when I first knew them; but what charmed now, in the extended version, was the ease with which tales so filled with the miraculous and horrific could contain landscapes of jewelled serenity. The porter of the prologue, staggering in the heat of the day with his burden, is attracted by just that serenity which afterwards we find as the background of the stories themselves:

> He passed the door of a house which seemed to him to belong to some rich merchant, as the ground about it was well swept and refreshed with rose-water. The breeze blew soft and cool there and a bench stood near the door for tired wayfarers, so Sinbad set his load upon the ground and sat down on the bench to breathe the scented air. He heard the concerted playing and singing of lutes and voices skilled in the craft of song, and the mingled jargonning of doves, nightingales, blackbirds, bulbuls, pigeons and tame partridges, praising Allah in sweet modes. He marvelled in his soul and, for very pleasure, passed his head through the opening of the door. . . .

That note remains; at the end of fierce adventures we return to seas of enchanted islands, a shady and bird-haunted meadow. It is an atmosphere as magic as that which surrounds the actors of *The Tempest*; not only Sinbad, but all the stories, however ribald or fantastic, return to it. It is artificial, supremely artificial, and yet it seems the touch of Nature.

Within that serenity, the variety of mood is immense. Animal fables, fairy tales, Grand Guignol, love story, legend and history—only the tragic sense, it seems, is missing. Perhaps where the book succeeds most surprisingly is in its treatment of the dirty story and the tall story as forms of art. (One leads to the other.) Rabelais, Chaucer even, seem gross by comparison. Grossness itself, of whatever sort, is made part of a larger opulence. *The Tale of Abu Kir and Abu Sir* is a saga of gluttony, in which we are spared nothing, and it is delightful. In many stories the body, with its

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functions and attendant elegances, is hymned as never before or since in literature. An ideal sensuousness recurs, of the sort which opium eaters claim for the influence of their drug. One of the most glowing passages in the book describes the opening of the first *hammam*—prelude to feasting and love.

That such a book, in which every story opens a door to six others, should ever end, is itself something of a miracle. Midway we are seized by hallucination—a childish, Isn't it too big?—as the Persian king must have been who multiplied grains of wheat on a chessboard. With the six hundred and seventy-fourth dawn Scheherazade, for the six hundred and seventy-fourth time, falls discreetly silent, breaking the tale as usual at a point which will touch us off again. Curious how that formal framework—the thinnest of gilt borders, revealed to us knob by knob—holds the picture in; it arouses little curiosity (we have long ceased to care for her head), but at the end, when her sister leads in a nurse with three children to plead for her life, the frame, too, catches our eye, the picture is set straight on the wall. A Breughel of the East!

The merits of Mr. Powys Mathers' translation, done from the French of Dr. J. C. Mardrus, are by now well known (this is a revision of his original text of ten years ago). It is incomparably the best version we have, and once and for all, let us hope, this book has been rescued from Burton, who gave it its reputation as an unreadable florilegium of smut. Though working from the French, he restores the poetry, the fastidiousness and candid humour which are obviously in the original. Reading haphazard, I have met hardly an awkward phrase; many of the verses are charming. It may well come to be regarded, with Scott-Moncrieff's Proust, as the masterpiece of prose translation in our time.

For children there is Dent's *Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights*. It is abridged from Galland, 1821. Though over 300 pages long, it contains only ten tales (Sinbad and Aladdin account for a hundred pages). The edition I knew as a child had thirty-four. A fable or two about animals, other than "The Speaking Bird" and "The Enchanted Horse," might surely have been included. However, the best stories are here, and they are plainly told. The illustrations, as usual, fail to astound. G. W. STONIER

TRIED OUT

Lucy Brown and Mr. Grimes. By EDWARD ARDIZZONE. *Oxford.* 6s.

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Babar's Friend Zephyr. By JEAN DE BRUNHOFF. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.

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Lars in Lapland. By H. and A. WADDINGHAM SEERS. *Harrap.* 2s. 6d.

Mary Plain on Holiday. By GWYNEDD RAE. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 3s. 6d.

The Stairs that Kept on Going Down. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. *Blackwell.* 1s. 3d.

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The Gunniwolf. By WILHELMINA HARPER. *Harrap.* 5s.

The Magic Kite. By KATHERINE FRENCH. *Blackwell.* 3s. 6d.

My Little Nursery Rhymes. By GILBERT COUSLAND. *Collins.* 3s. 6d.

The Magic Collar. *Lane.* 3s. 6d.

Here We Come a-Piping. By ROSE FYLEMAN. *Blackwell.* 2s. 6d.

Come Out to Play. By JOE WALKER. *Ward Lock.* 2s. 6d.

I Spy Rhymes. By WILMA HICKSON and ARCHIE HARRADINE. *Lane.* 2s. 6d.

RollingAlong Through the Centuries. By MARIE EMILIE GILCHRIST and LUCILLE OGLE. *Longmans Green.* 4s. 6d.

The Book of Living Reptiles. By RAYMOND L. DITMARS and HELENE CARTER. *Harrap.* 5s.

All of these books have been put to the only right and proper test: they have been tried out on children. The children in question were two small girls of five and a half and four years, less frequently another of seven, and a very small boy of four months, who registered violent gymnastic reactions in the arms and legs when confronted by the red rag of *Ferdinand*, which at that time had not been read and was thus not recognised as the story of a bull. Freudians please note. The reactions and opinions of these children were spontaneous as far down the list as *Lars in Lapland*. From that book to *The Magic Kite* there was a sharp lessening in interest, age alone being responsible. Mr. Cousland's book and *The Magic Collar* then gave them a tremendous kick, after which there was another gap, the verse leaving them luke-warm, and *The Book of Living Reptiles*, though in my opinion about the best book in the list, giving them the horrors and shudders completely. In these gaps parents of children from seven up to about fourteen (in the case of the Reptiles, older) will, with odd exceptions, find the books they are looking for.

I hate to say it, but M. Jean de Brunhoff has, in Zephyr, missed the target. I will explain all about Zephyr in a moment, but the slight deviation of M. de Brunhoff's aim lets in Mr. Edward Ardizzone, who scored an inner last year with *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*, and who hits the bull smack, this year, with *Lucy Brown and Mr. Grimes*. His method is the same as that used by M. de Brunhoff in the Babar stories and is, to my mind, the perfect method of story-telling for children of all ages up to ninety; by it, text is made subordinate to pictures. The method clearly borrows something from the film, and the text, as used by both Mr. Ardizzone and M. de Brunhoff, is merely a background commentary supplying slight guidance, a faint moral or a flavour of tears and sugar where necessary. This means that, unless the pictures are superb, the book is a flop. Mr. Ardizzone's pictures are first rate, and his pictures of Mr. Grimes, the friendless old gentleman who is befriended and nursed back to health by Lucy, are quite masterly in their colouring and comic untidiness (but why, Mr. Ardizzone, hasn't Mr. Grimes got a cracker at the tea-party? Answer that! This unjust omission has caused grave concern in the breast of a four-year-old); and the book is altogether a winner. It is hard to say why Zephyr is not so good. M. de Brunhoff has put into his creation the same inexhaustible passion for detail, the same prodigal love of colour and adventure, as he put into Babar. I fancy the reason may be zoological. Almost the whole secret of children's stories in which animals are heroes behaving and talking like human beings lies in choosing animals which are, in actual life, as unlike human beings as possible. Thus, at one end of the scale, Mickey; at the other, Babar. It is absurd and fascinating to see so small an animal as a mouse playing a piano, and equally absurd and fascinating to see so large an animal as an elephant leaning one elbow on the mantelpiece, because we know that in real life they would never do it. But it wouldn't be half so exciting to see a monkey doing the same thing, because such things are done by monkeys, as near as matters, in real life. In choosing a monkey to follow Babar M. de Brunhoff has, to my mind, made a mistake. Zephyr is too near us. The charm of Babar lay in that ponderous dignity, the gentlemanly gravity and the courteous tenderness of all he did. Huge but human, Babar was loved immediately. Zephyr has shown no signs of being loved, in my household at any rate, yet. However, there is a Babar this year, and very good it is. All that has been said in praise of Babar, by me or anyone else, goes for *Babar's A.B.C.* Into the same category as Babar and Mr. Ardizzone's books, come *Ferdinand* and *Horace*, bull and bear. Both are warmly recommended, though I must record a slight preference for the savagery of Horace, who made a meal off great-grandpa, great-grandma, grandpa, grandma, and so down the family tree, as against the docility of Ferdinand, who loved flowers and chewing the cud better than bull rings and matadors. Horace is also coloured.

The next five books on the list are uniform, and anyone faced with the problem of giving five equal presents to one family could do a thousand times worse than give this complete Hurdy-

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Gurdy Series. At ten shillings they make a very good set, though they are of course quite separate as stories. *The Baby Car*, the illustrations for which faintly recall *Toy-Town*, will be quite safe for any child as young as three, and it is perfect as a beginner's reader. *About a Bee* and *Whiffy McMann* come into the same category, both good, with pictures more important than text but text just important enough. Whiffy is a kitten, and there is another kitten, boon reprobate to a dog and a hen, in *About a Bee*. *The Hurdy-Gurdy Man*, much more ambitiously illustrated by Mr. Robert Lawson, is more advanced than these, and I would back it as a favourite for a girl about nine or ten. Animals have here been replaced by real people, the Hurdy-Gurdy man having adventures in a too-neat town with its Baker, Policeman, Mayor and School Teacher, and the book generally recalls Hans Andersen. But *The Bratchets* score, in my experience, the biggest success. This is interesting, for though the Bratchets are animals, no zoologist could identify them. A combination of hare, bear, ass, goat, fox and wolf (and maybe some more), these mythical creatures, seven in family, have become favourites next to Babar, and Bratchet itself a household word. Such a success for a mythical animal, still farther removed from ourselves than either mouse or elephant, seems to emphasise still more the reasons for M. de Brunhoff's failure with Zephyr. The Bratchets, anyway, are first rate, and if you can give only one of the Hurdy-Gurdy series, give this. Another charming set is made up by the four Buffin Books, excellent as first readers too. I don't think Mr. Buffin needs any more introduction now than Babar, and all I can say to those who have never met him is simply go ahead and get this series and then see how long it takes you before your life is worried out for Buffins Nos. 1 to 4, published in previous years. Mr. Buffin is easily recognisable, on the covers of these handy little books, as a sort of combination of Mr. Gladstone, Farmer Giles, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. James Agate, and the funny thing is he knows a lot about horses. *The Story of Sambo and the Twins* also belongs to a series. The same sensible size as the Buffins, and more gaily illustrated, it has just a couple of tear-drops in it. If it came to an argument, I would in fact just prefer it to the Buffins, having a weakness for its gay-coloured miniatures.

In fact, colour is everything. Even when you advance up the scale towards the seven and ten year olds, and romance has to be touched with realism and the exploits of other children become more fascinating than human-playing animals, it is still the book with colour which hits the bull's-eye. But I hope I am too sensible to make hard and fast rules about the taste of children, and *Mittens*, which is not really coloured but only cloudily pinked, would stand ready to make a fool of me if I were. *Mittens* is all about a kitten, and the fluffiness of Mrs. Newberry's illustrations are a greater delight than the text itself. But if you are looking for colour go straight for *Potter Pinner Meadow* (inhabited by moles, lizards, tortoises, rabbits, mice, etc.); *Diggory Goes to the Never Never*, with its delicious tree-bears and kangaroos, *The Land of Little Rain*, a story of Hopi Indian children illustrated with all the broad pure colour of an Indian blanket, and for *The Gunniwolf*, an excellent anthology of tales in which it is a little surprising to find Mr. Carl Sandburg side by side with Miss Fyleman and Mr. Hugh Lofting. Of the uncoloured books, in all of which text is more important than pictures, I find *Lars in Lapland* a tremendous favourite, and though I dislike magic as much as I love kites, I can say the same for Miss French's book. Mary Plain is new to me, and I can't say that the illustrations to the antics of this odd little bear excite me, though the text is good and the heroine already a favourite. And lastly, reluctantly, I must confess to absolute luke-warmness for Mr. Compton Mackenzie, whose book is far, far too literary, and then some, for children.

The next two books, both winners, rely almost solely on the beauty of photography for their effect. Nothing better is being done, anywhere, than Mr. Gilbert Cousland's photographic tales for children. His genius excels in taking the child's eye view of life, in giving freshness and enchantment to the living everyday scene. This year he takes a slightly different and obviously more difficult line in *My Little Nursery Rhymes*, but he succeeds triumphantly in recreating all the delicious beauty and half-real fancy of twenty-six traditional verses, and for pure imagination and artistry this is the first book on the list. *The Magic Collar* appears to be anonymous; but this in no sense detracts from its excitement or the sound workmanship of its photographs of children, dogs and a very English policeman, and the book has been a great favourite with the infants already mentioned. I would like to say as much for *Come Out to Play*, but verses for children are like beef-steak: when they're not good they're not good. Fortunately those in search of verses for children can go with confidence to an excellent little anthology compiled by Miss Fyleman, who in *Here we Come a-Piping* has collected together poems by Christina Rossetti, John Clare, Stevenson, Kingsley, Lewis Carroll, Walter de la Mare and about a score of others. I am as sure of the success of this as I am unsure of the *I Spy Rhymes*, in which the illustrated verses are minus about half the rhyme endings, the game being to fill them in by the help of the pictures. My criticism of this is that it is all too difficult for the very young and will probably be reckoned all too cissy for those old enough to do it. A hit-or-miss book, this. But those who think finding the missing rhyme a cissy game ought, I think, to fall hard for *Rolling Along*, the history of wheels through the centuries, from the wheels of primitive chariots down to the wheels of streamlined trains to-day. A man's book, this, first rate in every way, from America.

Also from America comes what is, to my mind, the best book of the whole bunch. *The Book of Living Reptiles*, though it gives my own children the shudders, horrors and willies, is a book that appeals at once to the imagination and intelligence, satisfies a desire for knowledge and beauty, and is a geography, encyclopaedia and adventure all in one. It describes, in sensible and unpretentious text, and in some remarkably vivid colour-maps, the extant reptiles of North, South and Central America, the Galapagos Islands, the West Indies, Europe and England, Africa and Madagascar, India and Malaya, New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand. Snakes, lizards, crocodiles, terrapins, iguanas, turtles and dragons crawl all over it in vivid orange and pink and blue and tropical green. An unusual book. But you feel sure your son would not like it? You are afraid your daughter would have the nightmare? Don't worry. I guarantee that if you buy this book your son or daughter, or anybody else's son or daughter, will stand precious little chance of getting a look in, let alone a nightmare, as long as you are about. H. E. BATES

"BIGGLESWORTH! THEY WOULDN'T DARE!"

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When I was King. By G. I. WHITHAM. *Blackie.* 5s.
The Schoolboy King. By MARK DALLOW. *Nelson.* 3s. 6d.
Robber Castle. By DIANA PARES. *Harrap.* 3s. 6d.
Flag of the Desert. By HERBERT BEST. *Blackwell.* 5s.
Tales of St. Cedrics. By L. C. DOUTHWAITE. *Nelson.* 3s. 6d.
The Richard Bird Omnibus. *Oxford.* 3s. 6d.

A lot of important news never seems to get into the papers. That business, for instance, of the French battleship bombed off Tilbury; the unnamed Power (can you guess, boys?) with a submarine base in the Indian Ocean; the infant King of Bolko Vornia kidnapped in the middle of the hols, and the infant King of Sylvania on the very first day of them. "But Bigglesworth!" cries Colonel Raymond of the Yard, "They wouldn't dare!" Wouldn't they, the poor fools! Armed with *kris* and sandbag and seaplane, they haven't a hope against Biggles's pipe and grin. Stalin and his gang might as well attack Peter Fleming.

Mr. Herbert Best, describing his hero, may also be describing an author of the post-Ballantyne school. Bill Griffiths, he says,

> absurdly pink for all his years in West Africa, settled back in his long deck-chair, sun-helmet and shot-gun beside him on the floor. And he wagged his ears.
>
> The wagging continued, painstakingly, persistently, and his round pudgy face wore an unwonted expression of intense concentration.

But the portrait must be enlarged. It must include so much accurate knowledge of gunnery and aeroplane design, such intimate acquaintance with joystick and petrol leads, that I don't see how the fellow can avoid being a swot. He grins and growls and grunts; in moments of conscious grandeur he replies quietly: but he seldom speaks. He exclaims "Jumping mackerel!" He is fond of jokes.

> Smack. . . . The chair tilted over and the Winkle, losing his balance, fell back into the fireplace.

Apart from a rather weather-beaten sister he naturally knows no women. And I strongly suspect him of being a road-house man, a leatherette settee man, an inhabitant of Weybridge.

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A real complaint, however, is that he thinks a succession of events enough for a story. All the grown-up heroes of these books are interchangeable. Jaggers and Biggles, Ginger and the Winkle, Bill Griffiths and Algy, they are each the same ghostly hearty. In *The Coral Island*, on the other hand, Ralph was Ralph and Peterkin was Peterkin. Among these books only the shrill Satanic creations of Richard Bird have a life of their own.

Perhaps I ought to have known Biggles before. Belatedly, we swap salaams. He stared with unseeing eyes at the blue water when Ladbroke was killed, and I liked him for that. Also, his story is really exciting. There are mangrove swamps, a munition dump in a crater, crocodiles, an island map, Dyaks, the dreaded *Semut apis*, an evil yellow face. Everything, in fact. And very well put together. I enjoyed this book a lot. So that it would be ungrateful to wonder what the thirteen-year-olds are going to get out of these facetious automata, chuckling over their bomb-racks, and apparently innocent of any emotion except the unseeing eye. Or moodiness. "'It's a bad business about that sailor being killed,' he went on moodily. 'Sullivan will jolly soon be getting fed up with me.'" But Biggles is the likeable ghost of a chap, and I hope the boracic lotion was strong enough for his ant-bites.

The adventures of Jaggers, we learn from the book-jacket, are interesting as illustrating the peculiar kind of problem that the air policeman of the future may expect to find himself up against. Peculiar is the word. In order to get into Lord Shearing's country house, when the bombs had destroyed the secret passage used by a rival combine of dyers to eavesdrop behind the panelling of his mullioned board-room, the wicked Saxby ties himself up in a parachute at the bottom of the garden and shouts for help. "A rather crude method," Jaggers calls it; but of course it is the business of a detective to see through that sort of thing.

An even wickeder combine threatened the Schoolboy King. And, for that matter, the Tuke-like cousins who smile in unison out of Mr. Whitham's dust-cover. King Michael I liked until he closed a chapter by crooning (Mr. Dallow chose the verb) "Beefy, *très* beefy"; King Nando's story is so like that of an older and neighbouring monarch that I tried to picture the tea-parties in Zenda—less awesome now that the rooms have been done up and electricity installed—while a white-haired Flavia dispenses tea and buns to the bordering crowned heads and the quiet, bearded Colonels who are in love with their mothers.

"Could I see Jacob's Ladder, Uncle Rodolf? I want to know if it's like the Saint's Anvil where *I* was."

"Certainly, Michael. It is in Mrs. Maugham's white Guard-room now."

Fingering their pointed beards, the Colonels play snap by the well-head; the kings, just on their legs again after a rigorous kidnapping, supervise their tuck-boxes and count the hours till the Orient Express takes them back to St. Cedric's.

Mr. Dallow's is the better book, though the final scene is too much to swallow. Instead of Michael addressing the people, the villainous Ollie comes out on the palace balcony and holds up the entire population of Sylvania with a pistol. He must have the king. . . . He shan't touch a hair of his head. . . . And then comes a fragment of immortal dialogue:

> "Say, buddy, you don't get me right. They've no choice in the matter. They've got to come, see."
>
> "You won't touch them. If you go too far the League will intervene. It won't stand for government by gunmen."

Luckily all ends well. The villains are downed without any executions, "which would have upset Mother"; the League "quite approves"; and a two-day sale at Christie's fetches enough money to put the country on its feet again.

Robber Castle is the story of two English children who are sent to Schloss Wolfstein to school. After that, the title indicates the plot, in which the delightful principals of the school are saved by their pupils from thieves who use the castle as a hiding-place for stolen jewels. This is a really good story for eleven-year-olds. There are fewer jokes, to compensate for milder thrills; and, on the whole, I have only one serious fault to find with the castle: its cooking, as shown by the fact that

> the sight of the next course was more cheering—blancmange covered in sweet pink sauce.

Mr. Best's book I found a laborious affair altogether, perhaps because of a very intense hatred of robed natives who speak like this:

> Think you that Mallam Fuskaddare, The Holy One, The Face at Nightfall, is to be exposed to your gaze like cloth upon the tenter-hooks? No wonder I waited without, and he came not!

The speaker, by the way, like the villainous Mr. Pringle in Lord Shearing's mullioned board-room, is a dyer, and so a suspect *a priori*.

I should not much have enjoyed being at St. Cedric's; but those who like boxing might do better. Gell, "broken in spirit and abjectly afraid," confessed that he was routing in the Chief's study for the Scholarship papers; otherwise the boys are all good compromise figures, slight but strong, pacific but invincible, sly but straight. There is nothing here to offend the Mosley Youth.

The Oxford Press have reprinted three of Mr. Bird's successful school-stories. Books such as these are unequalled propaganda for the Lycée, the Gymnasium, or that simple Arab education which consists in sitting on the floor and chanting the Koran aloud. They make, however, spirited reading; and I recommend *The Sporting House*—in particular a chapter headed A Monitor Blubs—to all connoisseurs of agony.

But does schoolboy taste really demand that the illustrations in all these books should be uniformly repulsive?

ALAN PRYCE-JONES

GUIDES FOR THE GREEDY

Cooking and Curing. By ORIANA HAYNES. *Duckworth.* 6*s.*
Good Sweets. By AMBROSE HEATH. *Faber.* 2*s.* 6*d.*
Early English Recipes. From Harleian MS. 279. *Cambridge University Press.* 2*s.* 6*d.*
The Book of Food and Drink. By GOURMET. *Lane.* 3*s.* 6*d.*
The Epicure's Companion. By EDWARD and LORNA BUNYARD. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Herbal Delights. By MRS. C. F. LEYEL. *Faber.* 15*s.*
Cheddar Gorge. By SIR JOHN SQUIRE and Others. *Collins.* 10*s.* 6*d.*
Serve It Forth. By M. F. K. FISHER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Much butter has melted in the frying pan since the Augustan Age of Mrs. Beeton; departing far from her severe classicism, the contemporary literature of gastronomy has become a shade whimsy. In an epoch of kitchenettes, chafing dishes and culinary amateurism, in which stenographers and screen stars alike study in their evening paper the sophisticated sauces of M. Boulestin, the old, magnificent simplicity—"Take a dozen eggs"—no longer suffices. Even those cookery books whose design is primarily functional have to be tricked out with a literary flavour or antiquarian interest; and around the kitchen and still-room craft there has grown a great accretion of parerga by authors whose intention is to promote the culture of fine eating and drinking, rather than to teach novices the precise methods by which a mashed spud becomes a delectable *purée de pommes*.

This miscellany of guzzlers' handbooks falls broadly into these two categories, with the reservation that Mrs. Leyel's delightfully erudite treatise on "tisanes, syrups, confections, electuaries, robs, juleps, vinegars and conserves" which can be made from the herbs of the field has an appeal to the botanist rather than to the gourmet; though I am prepared to be convinced that a cordial electuary of hyssop ("under the dominion of Jupiter and under the sign of Cancer") is both palatable and useful "whenever troubled with straightness at the stomach."

In so far as the professedly practical group of books is concerned, I am oppressed by the feeling that the conscientious reviewer ought to have tested out most of the recipes. *Mea culpa*: in shamefully egotistic aversion from duodenal ulcer (not because I doubt the authors' knowledge or goodwill, but simply because providence has denied me Falstaff's belly) I have shirked that task, and should therefore append, I suppose, "E. & O.E." to my certificate of their merits. But I have tried one unfamiliar recipe in each book; and since a fair number of others were familiar, perhaps my failure to apply a 100 per cent. totalitarian scrutiny may be assailed.

Mrs. Haynes, who clings stubbornly to the belief that sovereignty over the cooking-range should be matriarchal, and dates the decline of sound bourgeois cooking in England from the sinful day on which Mr. Lazenby decided to commercialise his mother's sauce, has gathered together family recipes inherited from two kitchen centuries, with some of still earlier vintage. Here are assembled few frenchified *plats* but many fine traditional dishes which have survived the vicissitudes of a dozen monarchs. On personal trial I can vouch for Old Sarah's remarkable recipe, Steak in Ale, and several recommended soups appeal strongly to my pioneering

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Scotland

HIGHLAND HOMESPUN *by* Margaret Leigh. *4th Impression.* 8*s.* 6*d. net.* Acknowledged to be among the best books written about farming in recent years. "a book absolutely after my own heart."—H. E. BATES.

proclivities. In this admirable collection of time-defying dishes, which includes, in a medicinal appendix, such useful remedies as that for a Madd Dogg (" Take these Words written in a Piece of Paper, R. Barabos, R. Barabos, Arios, Arios, Opalusqu, and rowle it up in a Piece of Butter and give it him ") I can find only one controversial item: Lobster Newburg should be flavoured not with sherry (as prescribed) but with equal amounts of brandy and port. At least, so I judge.

In *Good Sweets*, Mr. Ambrose Heath, eschewing the historical, has essayed to outline a list of kickshaws whose appeal is not primarily to the girls' school but to the male palate. I have searched in vain for one of the only two sweets I personally like—*pêches flambées*—but I am glad to find a word in favour of *zabaione* served half-frozen, as it used to be served to perfection in Barcelona before the deluge. To wives whose husbands' flagging interest in dinner's closing chapter (" Just a bit of cheese will do me all right ") seems to betoken a tendency to marital infidelity, this brave defence of the sweet tooth can be commended.

Following still the functional branch of the culinary tree, we revert to the fifteenth century. The Cambridge University Press has reprinted, with admirable wood engravings by Margaret Webb, a selection of recipes from the Harleian MS. 279 of A.D. 1430 The recommended method of preparing Welkys in Bruethe, or in modern English, whelks in savoury broth, I have tried and found excellent. Some of the old dishes are perhaps too heavily spiced for contemporary palates, but experiments might be amusing.

From the functional to the cultural " Gourmet " provides an easy transition. His *Book of Food and Drink*, which now appears in a cheap edition, is a pleasantly bonhomous guide to genial eating and drinking under a patriarchal regime of which Mrs. Haynes might not approve. There is an unparalleled list of concocted beverages (including many which even in my thirty years of experimental alcoholism have not come my way); and I fancy that Mr. Wodehouse's Jeeves studied with profit " Gourmet's " exhaustive dissertation on the proper treatment of the English male's breakfast appetite. The author's choice of recipes is selective but good. For the not-too-highbrow bachelor who wants to know " a bit about it " this would be an excellent Christmas present.

For those whose brow is higher there is the *Epicure's Companion*, devised by Mr. and Mrs. Bunyard. This is an anthology of culture and commentary for the gastro-centric, from whose pages much knowledge of the fitting respect for food and drink is to be derived. Here is a treasure store for those who desire to *pontifier* at table; but was it necessary, magistral Mr. Bunyard, to instruct your readers to pronounce Léoville-Lascases as " Lay-o-veal Lass-cahs "? The advice given to those about to stock a modest cellar is sound, and Mr. G. M. Thomson's article on whiskey, which appeared originally in the columns of this journal, is a classic on that great theme; but beer-drinkers will find strange *lacunae* in Mr. Bunyard's chapter on the product of breweries. Honouring Bass and Guinness as the " Great Names," he appears never to have heard of the one Home Counties brewery which still sells moderately good commercialised beer, still less of those still inviolate independents—one in the Duchy, one in the Cotswolds—where the only superb beer still sold in England is brewed.

Against commercialism—not in brewing but in cheese-making—*Cheddar Gorge* breaks a gallant lance. It tells the history and extols the virtues of the authentic English cheeses—Stilton, Wensleydale, Double Gloucester and the rest—and pleads for their cause against the synthetic products which figure on the menus of bad *hôteliers* as " Cheese and Biscuits." The tale is a sad one, in that in the Midlands and elsewhere many sorts of cheese have perished within the past two generations: no man now makes them. Nevertheless, Moray McLaren is wrong in suggesting that Dunlop is the only cheese made to-day in Scotland. Cheeses both of Cheddar and Stilton type are still made on farms in the Stewartry of Galloway. Long may they flourish.

To all good living an end. Though I have no idea who she is, except that she appears to be (oddly enough) an American, I should be well content to end my gastronomic days in the company of Mrs. Fisher. I found her book on civilised eating and drinking a delight. There is no conclusive evidence that she is a good cook—she gives but one practical, and superlatively good, recipe—but she has qualities admirable and rare, *pace* Mrs. Haynes, in woman. She can appreciate, as few women do, that finest of all alcohols, *le marc* of Burgundy; she can see in the shells of snails " one of the most luminous gentle browns in the world, like the hair of a Leonardo Virgin," and yet heartily enjoy eating them; and she can relish Colette's description of an *éclair si vomiteusement chocolateux*. She offers little or no useful advice on mashing potatoes, but demonstrates with gusto why *escargots* must be starved to death, and why rabbits should die in the beatitude of brandy. Of great meals she speaks with reverence, of the tragedy of time-worn waiters with human pity, and of the menu suitable for a dinner to be given by a cuckolded banker to his wife's friends with becoming levity. I repeat: I wish I knew Mrs. Fisher; for her book is the testament of one who has found in eating and drinking its supreme justification—fun. AYLMER VALLANCE

ABOUT ANIMALS

More Enigmas of Natural History. By E. L. GRANT WATSON. *Cresset Press.* 6s.

Battling with Sea Monsters. By F. A. MITCHELL HEDGES. *Duckworth.* 15s.

Fish Who Answer the Telephone. By PROFESSOR V. FROLOV. *Kegan Paul.* 6s.

As Mr. Llewellyn Powys has reminded us, everything in Nature is a miracle, and in so far as this is true, Mr. Grant Watson's *More Enigmas of Natural History* is aptly titled. Under this heading, the author invites our consideration of such varied topics as animal nurses, nurseries and midwives, infant voyagers, composite animals, degenerate birds, and such abstruse and yet unanswerable questions as the probabilities and otherwise of life after death. In some of these matters at least, Mr. Grant Watson stresses perhaps the miraculous a little too strongly.

Whilst almost every page of the book is both readable and informative, the author is perhaps at his happiest when describing his own first-hand experience with strange birds and beasts in Australia. For example, he describes how one goes hunting for that egg-laying mammal, the Echidna, with a dog with a good nose as though on a truffle foray. The dog locates the Echnida, usually in a log, which the hunter then splits open with an axe. Six of these animals he kept tethered outside his tent. These primitive mammals hatch their young from soft-shelled eggs—a reptilian trait—and later, suckle them in mammalian fashion. One learns with interest that natives actually tame these creatures, training them to come when called, like dogs. Though only about twice the size of a hedgehog, the Echidna is immensely powerful. Six specimens which the author kept for safety in his bedroom disarranged every item of furniture and almost overturned a heavy wardrobe during the night. Morning light revealed that they had torn up the floorboards and all had decamped. Since this occurred in a hotel, it is not surprising that some slight friction arose between the naturalist and the proprietor.

Equally interesting are his observations on birds in the Bush. Emus, it appears, can be lured almost within touch by flashing a mirror, which has an irresistible fascination for the huge birds.

Immunity from foes has bred extraordinary carelessness in certain Australian animals. The Kiwi, for example, sleeps so soundly that it will cheerfully allow itself to be handled without awakening or even stirring in its slumbers. The incubation of the eggs of these birds is undertaken by the cock which, although not much larger than a chicken, contrives to incubate two eggs each weighing 14½ ozs.

An interesting chapter touches on the " dying places " of animals, for long a favourite subject with adventure writers. The so-called elephants' burial ground, never yet definitely located, is a familiar example. Possibly more authentic is the dying place of the Huanacos or Camel Llamas of South America, which crawl beneath bushes in certain areas where their skeleton remains are found sometimes in astonishing numbers. The author draws a parallel between this and the famous march of the lemmings, those ratlike Scandinavian rodents, but the vast migrations of these animals, which terminate in death by drowning at sea, are now known to be the result of a disease engendered in the first instance by overcrowding within a certain circumscribed area. Most biologists may also be pardoned for refusing to accept Mr. Grant Watson's observations and reflections on the theory concerning the inheritance of acquired characteristics. In this book, illustrated by a number of attractive woodcuts by Miss Barbara Gregg, will be found abundant material for thought.

Life battling with sea monsters, with the world of newspapers, politics, telegrams, telephones, etc., left behind, is a glorious adventure to Mr. Mitchell Hedges. In his latest book he deals with the giant fish and other animals which he came across off the

so much done in 4 months

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shores of Honduras, Panama and elsewhere. He writes of the Sail Fish, Sword Fish, Jew Fish, Barracudas, Hammerhead Sharks, Tiger Fish with jaws that can span two men standing back to back, and giant Ray, twenty feet across and weighing five thousand pounds.

A vivid account is given of a battle with a giant Tiger Shark, 18½ feet long, and which, when opened up, was found to contain several lumps of coral, weighing three to four pounds each, some large bones, an enormous mass of fish in various stages of digestion, eighteen deep-sea crawfish, whole and perfect, weighing on an average four pounds each, and two pelicans. Dealing with the particularly dangerous fish known as the Death Ray, Mr. Hedges states that anyone struck by the dagger in the tail of this fish dies a horrible death in three to six minutes.

The author is of the opinion that most fish have no feeling. As he points out, one would think that sea eggs and sea urchins entirely covered with needle-like spines would be immune from attack. Such is, however, not the case, since certain fish devour them, and these have always a number of spines embedded in their mouths. The author caught many sharks, and when performing the autopsy on them found buried in the flesh round the jaws and driven into the roof of the mouth the daggers of the tails of the rays they had fed on. Many fish devour crawfish and other spiny creatures and get their mouths cut in the process. As suggested, if it caused them discomfort, they would surely change their diet. In an interesting account of the habits of pelicans, Mr. Hedges calculates that these birds daily consume at least three times their own weight.

The illustrations from photographs are a special feature of this entertaining narrative.

Under the somewhat startling title of *Fish Who Answer the Telephone*, Professor Frolov has collected his experiences as an investigator at various biological research stations. He describes the biological station on the Black Sea, the water of which is populous only for a depth of about a hundred feet, since beyond that poisonous gases make life impossible. A vivid account is given of Fabre's study of the Cercerus wasp. This insect feeds its grubs solely on a diet of Scarab beetles, which are so paralysed that they remain fresh but inert for days on end—a device which for the wasp overcomes all difficulties of storing food in a torrid climate without the use of a refrigerator.

The book takes its title from a disquisition on the many experiments now in progress to test the sensibilities and intelligence of fish—such experiments resting largely on the fish's capacity to locate a given food supply and unconsciously recording its movements by means of electric buzzers and other contrivances.

Two of the most entertaining chapters deal with the intelligence tests now being extensively applied by many investigators to apes and other of the higher mammals. Diverting also is the section dealing with the famous "talking horses" of Elbersveld, that not only exposes the ingenious fraud which gulled millions of guileless people in the years just before the war, but also casts some light upon various turns—not always to the showman's advantage. How a horse is taught "to do arithmetic" should be read by all those who declare that their pet dogs understand every word said to them. Interesting items of information abound throughout this book, which is ably translated by Mr. Stephen Graham.

E. G. BOULENGER

DISTINGUISHED GATHERING

Henry VII. By CHARLES WILLIAMS. *Barker.* 10*s.*
The Last Elizabethan. By DOROTHEA COKE. *Murray.* 15*s.*
Robespierre. By FRIEDRICH SIEBURG. *Bles.* 10*s.* 6*d.*
Marshal Ney. By LEGETTE BLYTHE. *Jarrolds.* 12*s.* 6*d.*
Ferdinand de Lesseps. By HUGH J. SCHONFIELD. *Herbert Joseph.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

King, bureaucrat, dictator, soldier. It is easy enough to label in a single word four out of the five subjects of these biographies, but the fifth defies such a simplified and concise description. The man who comes last, chronologically, the period at which he lived indicated by the cut of his coat and the cut of his hair, must be labelled more profusely as one who made a dream, a dream which had been dreamed for 3,000 years, a fact. The practical benefit to mankind of bringing the East nearer to the West by connecting the waters of two ancient seas through a canal is not seriously minimised either by the reflection that it has sometimes been misused, or by the knowledge that the development of rapid transit by air has robbed it of its unique importance. In order of precedence, not of rank, nor of personality, nor of moral and intellectual assets, but of public service, Ferdinand de Lesseps should perhaps be introduced first. That he is not is simply because it is not in this order I have arranged the distinguished gathering. Nor their biographies. If these were arranged by precedence of merit, Dr. Sieburg's illuminating study of Robespierre would come first. My arrangement being merely chronological, I begin with Henry VII, whose life has been written by Mr. Charles Williams for what appears to him the excellent reason that comparatively few biographies of the first of our Tudor sovereigns exist. "To have some notion of Elizabeth, Mary, and Henry VIII, and none of their father and grandfather is merely tiresome. This book is a personal effort to avoid that tiresomeness. The mere difficulty of discovering Henry as a person makes him attractive." Now while Mr. Williams has compiled a very interesting and instructive narrative of Henry's career and achievements, the difficulty that allured him has not been overcome. "For his pleasures, there is no news of them," wrote Francis Bacon, Henry's first biographer, and for everything else helpful in determining what sort of person Henry was there is no news either. No contemporary tales of idiosyncratic habits and preferences, no self-revelations in letters, no chronicled conversations of an intimate character. Ambassadors at Henry's Court have nothing to write home about his private affairs. Perhaps he was a sphinx without a riddle, a mask without a face. The self he kept to himself so consistently that even the Spanish Ambassador, de Puebla, who was often in his company, and appears to have been his only friend, could not gain access to it, may have been devoid of interest. He may have expressed no strong opinions, no passionate feelings, not from a cautious reticence, but because he had none to express. Mr. Williams, like others who have written about his reign, is all at sea about the motives of his policy. "He seems to have thought." "He seems to have believed." It was on the whole a statesmanlike policy. Henry delivered England from the curse of civil war, put down the insurrections of Yorkist pretenders without excessive cruelty, conducted his relations with foreign powers skilfully, and made some reforms which were beneficial to his subjects. He increased the power of the throne by multiplying himself through his agents. Mr. Williams' chapter on this multiplication of the King is one of the best in a book which, in spite of its failure to "discover" Henry, is a valuable contribution to the study of the engine of monarchy he created.

Sir John Coke, who began doing the State some service under the seventh Henry's granddaughter, Elizabeth, and went on doing it in the competent, industrious and unspectacular way of permanent officials, during the next two reigns, has found a sympathetic biographer in a descendant, who unlike Mr. Williams has not had to write against the heavy odds of insufficient personal material. Rather, she appears to have had more than could be used without recourse to a sieve. The voluminous correspondence of Coke, Deputy Treasurer of the Navy (1599), member of a Commission to investigate the abuses of the Navy (1618), Master of Requests (1622), and later Secretary of State, has not been sifted enough in this pious biography. Far too many humdrum letters to and from this admirable public servant, but rather dull man, have been included. However, the reader who has the patience to sift them will be rewarded by being able to piece together a picture of life in England from the Armada to the Civil War, singularly complete to the minutest detail. The fine illustrations, which include reproductions of Janssen's portraits of Coke, will cheer such a reader on his way.

Conditions in Europe to-day prevent us, who are growing old, from reading the life of a terrorist dictator of yesterday with the complacent detachment possible in our youth when we believed that those former things had passed away, and that never again would an individual have the power to mould a people subject to him into his own image, ruthlessly crushing resistance with imprisonment or death. The new life of Robespierre by Dr. Sieburg has made that clear to me. History is repeating itself. Robespierre's mistake in making a doctrine, not men, the object of politics is being repeated. The narrative of Robespierre's mistake has been related in scores of books, but never in any of them I have read, as lucidly and philosophically as by Dr. Sieburg. As a prologue to it he reconstructs the scene on the morning of the 10 Thermidor in a room at the Tuileries. There Robespierre, dying from the wound he had inflicted on himself at the Hotel de Ville when the troops of the Convention poured into it, had been carried on a wooden board. Formerly this room had been one of

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the Queen's apartments. "The ceiling painted by Mignard portrayed a smiling Apollo in a landscape of pillars and pink clouds, welcoming the goddess Minerva and her retinue." Dr. Sieburg conjectures what passed through Robespierre's mind as he gazed at that ceiling. In this fanciful way he gives us an epitome of the man's past, not at all fanciful, but based on known facts. Then he shows how this man who started as a humanist, the devout disciple of Rousseau, became in the course of his short term as a ruler the symbol of inhumanity. "In order to further the triumph of morality he annulled moral laws. In order to realise a human ideal, he abolished human values." Thus a revolution that was begun under the banner of humanity, and was to bequeath a heritage of humanity to posterity, provided under the leadership of Robespierre the sharpest refutation of its own ideals. Dr. Sieburg writes in an impassioned rhetorical style (if his translator has represented it faithfully in English which I have no reason to doubt), but it is justified by the vivid reality of the pictures it conjures up of men and events. The dyer's hand must be subdued to what it is working in, and Dr. Sieburg's is working in the most sensational epoch in history.

Did Ney, the bravest, if by no means the ablest, of Napoleon's marshals, die under the firing squad after his condemnation for treason in December, 1815, or did he escape to America, and live there as "Mr. P. S. Ney" until the year 1846? An American journalist, Mr. Legette Blythe, deals with this question in *Marshal Ney: A Dual Life*. He produces a considerable amount of evidence that Peter Stuart Ney, the mysterious schoolmaster who turned up in North Carolina a few months after Marshal Ney's corpse, riddled with bullets, had been buried in Père la Chaise (according to official reports) was believed by many who came in contact with him to be the Marshal. But the case for their identity rests chiefly on an analysis of specimens of their writing by an expert who has declared they come from the same hand. Such interest is taken in the Ney legend in North Carolina that a scholar there has been engaged for years on the work of deciphering the shorthand manuscript notes left by "P. S. Ney." Should the result of this labour be conclusive proof that P. S. Ney was neither the victim of a delusion, nor a deliberate impostor, but truly the man he claimed (only spasmodically when he was tight) to be, I should have nothing to say except, "Bless thee, Marshal Ney, how art thou translated!"

In Mr. Hugh Schonfield's able biography of Ferdinand de Lesseps much space is naturally devoted to the Suez Canal. But he has found room for an interesting account of de Lesseps' previous work as a diplomatist, and describes in detail the tragedy of his old age. Fortunately de Lesseps was not in his "perfect mind" in 1893 when the Panama Company Directors were tried, but he had not been spared the terrible blow of realising that his second canal enterprise had failed. Mr. Schonfield admits that de Lesseps was often "too cocky and cock-sure," and surely he was never more so than when he started on the Panama canal without counting the probable cost in lives and money.

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

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COMPOSERS, JOURNALISTS
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BOOKS FOR PRE-ADULTS

The Hobbit. By J. R. R. TOLKIEN. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.
My Friend Mr. Leakey. By J. B. S. HALDANE. *Cresset.* 6s.
In and Out of Doors. By SUSAN, CHARLOTTE and CHRISTOPHER, and their Parents, AMABEL and CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS. *Routledge.* 6s.
Sir Malcolm Campbell's Book of Famous Motorists. *Blackie.* 5s.
How It Goes. By HERBERT MCKAY. *Oxford.* 3s. 6d.
The Fifth of November. By L. A. G. STRONG. *Dent.* 5s.
Head Wind. By HAWTHORNE DANIEL. *Blackwell.* 5s.
A Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales. By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. *Dent.* 3s. 6d.
It's Perfectly True and Other Stories. By HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.
Tales from Grimm. By WANDA GÁG. *Faber.* 5s.
Martin Pippin in the Daisy Field. By ELEANOR FARJEON. *Michael Joseph.* 8s. 6d.
From Seven to Eight. By M. T. CANDLER. *Lane.* 5s.
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It is an even harder matter to recommend books for children than books for grown-ups; since children differ rather more widely from each other than grown-ups do. They differ in two dimensions, as it were. First, there is as much difference between one eight-year-old and another eight-year-old as there is between one forty-year-old and another forty-year-old; and reviewers who say "all children of six to eight will enjoy so-and-so," might as well say "all adults of thirty-five to forty will enjoy thingummy-bob." But, in addition to the difference between children of the same age, there is the enormous difference between the same child at one age and another. What Uncle George approves at forty, he is unlikely to reject as wholly unpalatable at fifty; but what Georgie gobbles at seven may be anathema to him at eight. Yet we conveniently label all the pre-adult ages "childhood," as if they were all the same as each other! It is convenient, of course, to distinguish between "town" and "country": but suppose a traveller on the Great Western Railway found all stations but Paddington simply labelled "Country," and was expected not to mind in the least which he was dumped at!

This prefatory admonition is really directed as much to myself as to the reader: because I am tempted to say that all children will enjoy *The Hobbit*. That of course would be nonsense. But a very great many will; and though the ages for which it is written range roughly from six to nine years, you may expect very considerable extensions at both ends of that period. I myself have tried it on a four-year-old with marked success; and I have tried it on myself with marked success also. The author is a professor of Anglo-Saxon; and because the author of "Alice" was also a professor the publishers are tempted to compare the two books. Actually, they are wholly dissimilar. There is no philosophical fantasy in *The Hobbit*. But they are alike in this, that in both cases the author is so saturated in his life-study that it waters his imagination with living springs. Professor Tolkien is saturated in Nordic mythology: so saturated that he does not rehash this mythology and serve it up at second-hand, rather he contributes to it at first hand: and thus his wholly original story of adventure among goblins, elves and dragons, instead of being a *tour-de-force*, a separate creation of his own, gives rather the impression of a well-informed glimpse into the life of a wide other-world; a world wholly real, and with a quite matter-of-fact, supernatural

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natural-history of its own. It is a triumph that the genus *Hobbit*, which he himself has invented, rings just as real as the time-hallowed genera of Goblin, Troll, and Elf.

One word of warning, though. Some adults may think parts of this book rather terrifying for bedside reading (although, however fearful the adventure, things always turn out right in the end). I myself think this caution is a mistaken one. For a child has a natural capacity for terror which it is next to impossible to curtail; and if you withhold from him such proper objects of terror as goblins, trolls, and dragons, he will work himself just as frantic over an odd-shaped bed-post—or the over-hearing of such a frightful piece of news as that *there is a barrister pleading in the court*.

Another professor, this year, has written children's stories: Professor Haldane. Needless to say, his is a book altogether out of the common. But it suffers, I think, from an excessive brilliance of imagination; a continuous flashing from incongruous facets that makes it very difficult to follow the story. For flashing brilliance is seldom lucid. Mr. Leakey is a magician. Each separate miracle he works is itself a fantastic conceit of the first water—and there are thousands of them. But between the flashes are rather leaden little facts, which contrast with rather than relieve the dazzle.

A book which I am inclined to recommend almost as strongly as Professor Tolkien's, for family use, is *In and Out of Doors*: a sort of junior *Week-end Book*, by the Williams-Ellis Family, *Père, Mère, Filles et Fils* (or in deference to their nationality should I say *Tad, Mam, Merched a Mab*?). It is no good trying to quote from it, as one of its chief charms is that it is so heterogeneous: a sort of encyclopedia of whatever is interesting or funny, from boat-sailing to howlers, from edible toad-stools to parlour-games, from the *Arabian Nights* to choosing a camp-site, from—but I should not exhaust all the possible antitheses until I had exhausted the whole Contents. Moreover, each item, whether it be information or fun, is exceedingly good of its kind, concise, exhaustive without being exhausting, original. I disagree with the authors' preference for bitches. I disagree with their answer to the puzzle on page 442. I wish there was an Index. But these are small points. Wet or fine, winter or summer, the book is invaluable. Boredom will never poke his nose into a house where it rests on a convenient shelf.

And now, what is there for schoolboys? There is *Sir Malcolm Campbell's Book of Famous Motorists* (edited by Sir Malcolm, whatever that amounts to). It includes a good deal of information, largely photographic: and will probably be devoured by the young motor-maniac. There is *How it Goes*, a book of machinery, with photographs of the whole and unusually clear diagrams of the parts. But neither of these two are world-beaters. In fiction for schoolboys (and schoolgirls, too) there is something considerably better: there is L. A. G. Strong's *Fifth of November*. In this story a boy brings home a piece of plaster from the cell in the Tower where Guy Fawkes lay; puts some under his own pillow and some under his uncle's, on the night of the Fifth; and as a result they dream the whole historic story in exact detail. The historical part of the book is done as well as it could be done: breathlessly exciting, and fair. But I feel the introductory, present-day part to be rather too long-drawn-out and hammered-in. Mr. Strong knows his audience better than I do, so I criticise with diffidence; no doubt he is right that the "psychology" must be simple, and explained with a sledge-hammer, but surely the method risks tedium, even with the young? Would it not be better to attempt less, in this field? I suppose many schoolgirls will love to identify themselves with the understanding Margaret: but ought they to be pandered to? Personally, if I were Uncle Edward and had a niece so deeply understanding, so Olympianly motherly towards me, I should smack her bottom in the rudest way. But the historical part of the book—the main part, that is to say—is quite exceptionally well done.

A decent and sensible adventure story is *Head Wind*, a story of pirates on the New England coast in Colonial days. Recommended. Some of the characters have odd names: the Pirate Captain is called Demon Romp, and the (adult) hero is Maddon Blast. But Connecticut is a country of queer names. I have seen the headstones in a lonely graveyard there of Miss Nabby Freelove and Mrs. Submit Bates, who lie side by side till the Last Trump, beneath the august marble effigy of Orlando Swift, Esq.

There are three new editions of classics. A *Tanglewood Tales*, an *Andersen*, and a *Grimm*. Myself, I hated and despised the *Tanglewood Tales*, as a child, for their perversion of the pure Greek myth into mere fairy-stories. Good as they are, I would never recommend them for a child: for this reason, that the first version of a myth which a child hears will be for ever after the Authorised Version, and all others apocryphal. Of the other two, the Hans Andersen has really been sent to me by mistake; for its purpose is to emphasise that Andersen's stories were written at least as much for grown-ups as for children. It is a new translation, including several little-known stories: and it is altogether an excellent edition. Wanda Gág's translation of a selection from Grimm is also new, and also good.

What remains? Eleanor Farjeon's *Martin Pippin in the Daisy Field*, for one. Whimsical, charming (Miss Farjeon has too many admirers already to need further recommendation). What else? *Seven to Eight*. Commonplace. And *A Hundred Enchanted Tales*: a voluminous anthology compiled by Clemence Dane. Well-chosen, but, unfortunately, in rather small print.

In children's books, the illustrations are half the battle: and up till now I have mentioned the illustrations of none of these books. The decay in the art of book-illustration which set in with the death of Queen Victoria, and assumed the dimensions of a debacle with the war, still plumbs new depths. The various attempts at "renaissances" for the most part only serve, like the struggles of a man in a bog, to sink it deeper. The original, nineteenth-century illustrations to Hans Andersen, which are mercifully reproduced in this edition, are not particularly good of their period: but how much better their period was than ours! Could anything be more cissy than the illustrations to this *Tanglewood Tales*? Heaven forbid that I should record my opinion of the illustrators of all these books. Let most of them be passed in silence. But I cannot restrain my regret that the author's own illustrations to *The Hobbit* show no reflection of his literary talent and imagination. Only two of these books have illustrations worth looking at once (let alone being deeply pored over). The drawings in *Mr. Leakey* do succeed in rivalling the text in their fantastic conceit: the two are well wedded. Of the almost innumerable illustrations to *In and Out of Doors* some are old (e.g., the drawings by Lear, and the illustrations from the Arabian Nights). The others are by Miss Susan Williams-Ellis: and being useful, minutely detailed, and attractive, shine through this naughty pile like a good deed.

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KISSING THE ROD

Kissing the Rod. By VIOLA MEYNELL. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

It is more difficult to make your name your own if your family have already used it. Miss Meynell had to disentangle her personality for the public from the various sentiments inspired by an eminent poetess (her mother) and an ardent (imprisoned) conscientious objector (her brother, Francis Meynell). Perhaps not even from the sentiments they inspired. For though ice and snow may provide protective colouring for a polar bear, protective colouring in the shape of an eminent family can hardly be an advantage to an author who is, therefrom, in danger of being overlaid rather than revealed. Writing an article on "Why to rouge and how to hesitate," the daughter of an archbishop would no doubt gain by being the daughter of an archbishop. You can be a dean writing about boxing or a prize-fighter writing about God, but to be an infinitely distinguished member of an infinitely distinguished literary family who *writes!* That is obviously a most awkward position. Everyone who shares a name feels the sense of a faintly unfair distribution of personality. I cannot assess Miss Meynell's damages but her name should certainly be her own.

These general reflections come to me each time I read one of her books. I am not talking of the general public, but a number of private publics from whom the exquisite pleasure of knowing her work has been inexplicably withheld.

Kissing the Rod is a collection of short stories.

How long can a short story be? The English do not, our publishers tell us (and for once our publishers are right), like a *nouvelle* (*Adolphe*, for instance, would be considered prohibitively short as a book by itself), but are, to take only masterpieces—*Father Sergius*, *The Death of Ivan Ilytch*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Torrents of Spring*, *The Gadsbys*, *The Fox*—short stories or short novels? Does the essence of short story lie in the brief capture of a moment or a mood, in the flash of a sudden event; may it be allowed to meander, and if it be allowed to meander, is it not encroaching on alien territory?

Why have we chosen this particular form of art and can our medium be stretched to include *Father Sergius* and *The Reticence of Lady Anne*, a masterpiece that cannot be denied the right to be called a short story since it is, I think, three and a half pages long?

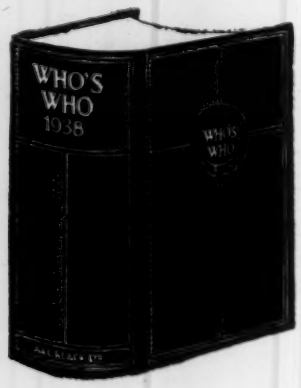
Mr. Maugham, in his last volume of short stories, has produced a commandeered twist at the end of almost each of his stories, probably in order to counterbalance their diary quality, but you get the sense of a carpentered trick. You feel not a solution but a Jack-in-the-box. Twists are the life blood of short stories, but they must not look like a contrivance, they must arise from, and not be safety-pinned on to, the narrative. Saki's genius, because twisted in its essence, made the final twist inherent in the story. Tchekov and Ring Lardner dispensed with all devices.

It is interesting to compare Mr. Maugham with Miss Meynell. Mr. Maugham's artfully colourless prose carries you along on a swelling tide of narrative. With Miss Meynell you find yourself continually loitering over a phrase. You walk into a word as you might walk into a patch of sunlight. You rightly tell yourself that you are being self-indulgent and that for a love of an immediate delight you are breaking up the rhythm of paragraph, but then you reread, for there is no excuse for breaking up—even with your own delight—the exquisite delicacy of Miss Meynell's style.

Kissing the Rod contains eleven stories varying in theme, varying in mood. But though the beads have different shapes and different colours, they are threaded on the same string of insight. Whatever the theme, irony and tenderness claim some of the spoils. I suspect "We Are Just Saying . . ." of being the best of the stories, but Kendal in "Time, Space and the Loved One" is a brilliant portrait and George in "Pastoral" (an exquisite story) filled me with such a profound love for George and such a passionate longing for a happy ending that I had to impose all the discipline acquired by constant reading of detective stories in order not to look at the last page.

Like all good novelists Miss Meynell presents us on every page with a portrait of ourselves—infinitely delicate yet absolutely precise. Whatever the character may be—man, woman, cad, yokel, fair, dark, impossible, charming, grave, gay—we find ourselves, and, if we say, "How like So-and-so?" is not that the same thing?

ELIZABETH BIBESCO



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OUR MR. CALIBAN

Question Time. By HUBERT PHILLIPS. *J. M. Dent and Sons.* 5*s.*

When people ask you "Who is Hubert Phillips?" and you reply "Dogberry," they say "Oh!" But if you answer "Caliban," they say either "Oh, *I* know!" or else "Never heard of him." If they are of the never-heards you just leave this book casually in their way (after you have done with it) and you may be sure that next time they will know too. But if they know already, you may tell them that this book is in many ways his best.

For he has done the hardest thing there is for a clever man to do—he has come down to those who are not so clever as himself. The earlier Caliban books (apart from some delightful intelligence tests) were apt to discourage too many potential buyers at the start. But here is variety. There are little intelligence tests headed "For the Lower Fifth"; word squares you can do in your head; all kinds of anagrams and verbal juggleries. There are also plenty of the inferential problems beloved of so many; crimes, too, in which the villain is detectable and all the clues are there and the solution is unique.

But, although the lower slopes are more suited to novices than in some of Caliban's earlier works, the upper heights are just as challenging as ever, though it is doubtful whether anything has ever quite come up to "Caliban's Will" in *Caliban's Problem Book* of four years ago for sheer apparent irrelevance in data combined with logic in solution. For those who like them there are problems in probability and ciphers galore; there is also a fearsome section headed "For the Upper Sixth" which culminates in a problem, set by Sir Arthur Eddington, entitled "Looking-glass Zoo."

Let no one be deterred by the fact that the solution (for there are solutions to all) is in this case as unintelligible as the problem. True, it involves the mathematical technique employed by Sir Arthur in explaining (to the annoyance of many physicists) why the fine-structure constant ought to be exactly 137 and not 137 point something. But it just shows that when the great man is contemplating pairs of mutually indistinguishable electrons he pictures them not as billiard balls but as Looking-glass Beasts, male and female—or, to give his own names for them, Borogovus Mimsius, Rathus Momus and Jabberwockius Vulgaris. There is

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HERE I LIE

XMAS GIFT BOOKS from ROUTLEDGE KEGAN PAUL

an exposition of this solution by "Champ" which Caliban describes in his foreword as "the most brilliant thing of its kind I have ever read"; but how one would like to have Lewis Carroll's own views on this particular problem, and on much else in the book.

Caliban's books, now coupled with delightful and original line-drawings by Yvonne Bendell, are becoming more and more enjoyable merely as reading without any attempts at solving the conundrums. Here are some of the best names since "Q" invented the Hon. Frederick Goodwyn-Sandys, son of Lord Sinkport. Here is Professor Hoopinkoff, who is foully dispatched by one of that villainous trio Alcoholi, Benzolini and Champagni; here is the Fifth Form at St. Luvaduc's (worthy successors to the Sixth Form at St. Derelict's); and here, too, is the country of New Paradise where the three parties are the National Preservatives, the National Leadables and the National Solecists, and they arrange among themselves who shall govern.

Each reader will have his or her own views on which are the best problems, but for sheer elegance in its simplicity the one on the Half-breed on the Island of Ko is hard to beat. But it is to be feared that Caliban (or, this time, Hubert Phillips) will be inundated with complaints (quite unfounded) because he has not stated the proportion of men to women in the population of Rumtifoo!

J. T. COMBRIDGE

EXCELSIOR

The Night Climbers of Cambridge. By "WHIPPLESNAITH." *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

This book has two aims. The less important is to break a lance with the mountaineer, sometimes returning scorn for his scorn, sometimes debating in amity matters of "rock" technique. The mountaineer will not always be convinced. Few will agree that it is "better far never to rope at all than to rope for easy climbs," or that it is justifiable to take a novice unroped on his first attempt at the vertical. But times change. It may be that some day Nature's rocks will be attacked with equal lightheartedness. At present, in words that the author quotes from a one-time President of the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club, "the mountaineer is not a cat-burglar." The more important aim of the book is to lead the uninitiated behind the scenes; to explain *why* one climbs roofs, or, indeed, mountains. Every book about climbing makes some attempt at this; the author here, unfamiliar with the usual formulae, does it admirably. A pleasing description of his own start; then this:

> The climber is as a man standing on the edge of an abyss. The chance of falling over or of the ground crumbling beneath his feet is negligible, yet his very closeness to the edge makes him think. He cannot but visualise what would happen if he stepped forward, and realise with a shock of what very small significance it would be. The sun would still be shining and the waterfall would still be roaring below, and suddenly he realises, perhaps for the first time in his life, what a friendly fellow the sun is, what vividness there is in the green around him.

Thus the adventurer reveals a secret, to which the millions, who have never climbed a drain-pipe, may none the less respond.

The book, though written without many pretensions, still achieves the closeness and the changes of the better works on exploration; along with a humorous familiarity, which, at its best, is rather charming. The flat tops of Marks and Spencers' shop are converted into a desert as romantic as Central Africa, bristling with policemen; and the turrets of King's College Chapel are a playground as fierce as any Dolomite. Without any desire to follow through the "cold grey hours before the dawn" the dweller below still feels an interested, if rather sneaking, sympathy. Adventures upon Everest or in the Antarctic may fascinate from their wildness, their more unintelligible qualities; they cannot from their proximity. Nobody who has ever been to Cambridge could be without interest in the buildings; it is a touch Wordsworthian to build drama out of its normality.

But it is one thing to admire the adventures recorded in *The Night Climbers*, quite another to agree with its theses. These are, first, that it is pleasurable to climb in the dark, in danger of the powers that be; secondly, that it is unreasonable to consider the welfare of the "rock" up which some of the best climbs lie. On the first score, *chacun à son goût;* but on the second there is ground for protest. King's Chapel itself has suffered; and to say, with the author, of the main gate of St. John's, that it is a "very difficult climb with crumbly stone" is merely another way of saying that in a few years a most interesting monument will have vanished. But dawn breaks; it is time for us—and for the author—to leave his pinnacle. Roof-climbing, like surrealism, is an adventure of the few, a disease, some would say, in which the many feel faint interest. It is a fashion whose more ardent supporters might well be glad with rather less publicity. Meanwhile, this book provides a charming *apologia* for a dubious cause. The photographs, of which there are many, for the most part, presumably, taken at night by flashlight, are admirable.

C. W. F. N.

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HODGE

THEY'VE GOT HOT LIPS

Hot Jazz. By HUGUES PANASSIÉ. Translated from the French by LYLE and ELEANOR DOWLING. *Cassell.* 15s.

Jazz is as much a part of the twentieth century background as the telephone bell and the film. But unfortunately, the jazz that most people know, whether they hear it in a Mayfair night-club or at a local "hop," in its canned record or radio form, is "background" jazz: one can talk to it, eat to it, read to it and dance to it, but one cannot listen to it without being at once aware of its incredible emptiness. In fact it is not jazz at all, any more than Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande* is jazz, or meant to be, just because it makes use of that idiom. The commercially minded were quick to see that real jazz, like good music, would never sell to a large public, but they also saw that the purely rhythmic and less intelligent side of jazz could be exploited by vulgarisation, and they have done this with complete success, producing an emasculated version of jazz which a large public readily accepts. Perhaps it is because of this that M. Panassié errs on the safe side and calls his book, *Hot Jazz*. There is a rather sickening foreword by Louis Armstrong, acting the simple negro, and it will be a pity if this deters anyone from reading one of the few serious books written on the subject.

M. Panassié is not very happy trying to analyse and define "swing" and the "hot style"; he is a little laborious and repetitive without telling us much that we could not learn more easily by listening to records, as he himself admits. But he makes a good point in stressing the importance of solo and collective improvisation in jazz, and the records he chooses to illustrate his

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text—and this applies throughout the book—are excellent. His fault is over-seriousness, so that he dismisses Cab Calloway as a singer, apparently not realising the satirical quality of his voice, which has the destructive power of turning sentimentality into a riot. In *The Dance of Death* as produced at the Westminster Theatre, the blues skit was sung by Miss Hedli Anderson in the Cab Calloway manner, and it was a good choice. But when he writes about individuals and their playing M. Panassié is much more sure of himself. He knows this side of his subject thoroughly, and his chapters on Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong are good, although I think he attaches far too much importance to the latter. To call him "one of the most extraordinary creative geniuses that all music has known," shows a sad lack of balance. By far the most interesting chapter in the book is that on "The Other Improvisers" (namely, other than Louis Armstrong). All the jazz musicians of any merit in "hot" playing are discussed here, and M. Panassié shows himself a critic who can be trusted. He has taken great pains to make his list as accurate and as complete as possible. M. Panassié has not tried to make out a case for negro superiority in jazz, but after reading his book, one's impression that on the whole negroes are better at jazz than white men is strengthened. To take only the pianists, the negro race gives us Earl Hines, Thomas "Fats" Waller, Teddy Wilson and Mary Lou Williams, all of whom M. Panassié rightly puts in the first rank. Mary Lou Williams has recorded three very good sides for Columbia, which were presumably released too late to be mentioned in the book. For anybody who is interested in this remarkable woman pianist, who is perhaps less well known than the others, they are *Overhand, Clean Pickin'* and *Corny Rhythm*. A curious omission from the book is the name of Fred Elizalde, a pianist who, with a small band, made one or two very good records for Brunswick about ten years ago. Valaida Snow, a negress who is a good satirical singer in the "hot" style, is not named either. Her best record is probably *I Wish I Were Twins* and *I Can't Dance I've Got Ants In My Pants* (not a stupid comedy number as one might think from the title), recorded on Parlophone. She is also a good trumpet player.

M. Panassié's book has arrived rather late in England. It was published in Paris in 1934, and the American edition appeared in 1936. However, there are a few additional notes to the American edition, and except for a few records that could be added, it is up to date.

The author modestly devotes one short paragraph to the String Quintet of the Hot Club of France, an unprecedented combination of one violin, three guitars and a string-bass. This band is one of the best I have heard, and has now made some good records for H.M.V.

The book has an invaluable appendix of records—an almost complete list of recordings by Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington (*Immigration Blues* and *The Creeper* are missing from the Ellington list, but I believe this record, issued by Oriole, is now unobtainable), and a list arranged under instrumentalists, giving records in which they play good solos. This appendix will burn holes in the pockets of anyone at all interested in jazz.

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Meanwhile, the books themselves maintain a good average. First, the two which really possess distinction. *Afke's Ten* is about the doings of a large and very poor family in a Frisian village : we are told that in Holland it already ranks as a children's classic, and that the International Bureau of Education has recognised it as one of the best "international goodwill" stories in the world. It is a book for quite small children—very homely and simple, but in the grand style, and beautifully concrete : every detail stands out. It is moral and sentimental without disguise, but never too much so ; sometimes the devoted but harassed mother loses her temper, and the children, though devoted in return, are not patterns. Nothing very much happens in it, but its small events are thrilling as they would be in real life. It is likely to infect all imaginative children with a longing for Friesland, and perhaps even for hardship ; the poverty of Afke and her young troop is not glossed over, but all the same it has charm, and such enjoyments as come their way—a piece of bacon rind with the potatoes, for instance—are deliciously satisfying. Then, as it should be, there is something over for

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grown-up readers: the truth and beauty of the picture, and the humorous and tender attitude to the children themselves. *Afke's Ten* is the ideal book for a mother to read aloud.

Worzel Gummidge Again also has the classic flavour, slightly diluted. It is perhaps unnecessary to recommend the Scarecrow of Scatterbrook, since he already enjoys a wide popularity through the B.B.C.: but for that, indeed, I should have said it was touch and go whether he wouldn't scare a child into fits. He is so very matter-of-fact and convincing—and he passes himself off in all kinds of disguises with such sinister ease. But it appears that children don't blench at him, and certainly the whole band of scarecrows is excellent company if your nerves are good enough. Worzel's style of argument has a false air of rationality almost worthy of Lewis Carroll, from whom it derives; and the narrative is admirably traditional in its lack of fuss.

There is a drop after that: none of the other books are likely to keep, but some are very good indeed on their lower level. *Palaces on Monday* is the most sophisticated of the whole batch. It is about an American boy and girl whose father has taken a job in Russia, and who go out there to join him. At first their travel experiences—such as meeting a black boy on terms of complete equality—are a good deal of a shock: but they don't take long to become devoted to the U.S.S.R. and all its works, and to develop a passion for "social usefulness." I didn't find this story altogether congenial or convincing myself, but tastes differ; it is intelligent and well written—rather consciously so—and the illustrations are much better than usual. It would make a good Christmas present for children whose parents see red at the name of Red.

In *The Hand*, another boy and girl—English this time—spending their Easter holiday with two queer old ladies, become aware of a sinister presence in the house, and a lot of mysterious goings-on, which they set out to investigate. The author has a sense of comedy that made me wish she would cut out the suspense, and give it more scope; but the adventures of Sally and Robert are well sustained. *John and Mary Abroad* touches half a dozen countries, including China; it is rather scrappy, and perhaps a shade too understanding about children, but very pretty and pleasant. And *The Family from One End Street* is a jolly, humorous, rather cockneyfied group of stories about a washerwoman and a dustman and their large family. Girls of twelve or thirteen ought to like it very much: indeed all these three should be popular.

Felicity Dances is hardly a story at all, though it begins like one; it is a thoroughly earnest little treatise, with a coating of narrative to make it agreeable to young readers. Felicity Ann is taken to the ballet on her twelfth birthday: she and her sister resolve to dance, and the rest is about their training, and the history of the ballet, and the experiences of other girls in their school. It will interest children with a vocation, and will turn no one's head; there is more high purpose than romance in it.

There remains a mixed lot, which I hardly know how to classify. *The Land of Green Ginger*, a bogus Arabian Nights tale about the son of Aladdin, is rather fun—though its jokes are of the least subtle, and its illustrations are most unfortunate. *Long Ago in Rouen*, a small book of whimsical little tales in an old-world setting, has a certain small charm. The mechanical trials and triumphs of Professor Branestawm are very funny when they come off, and painfully solemnising at other moments; the uproariousness of the tone allows of no medium. But it should be said that Branestawm, like the far more deserving Gummidge, is a B.B.C. favourite. *The Good Master* describes the life of a boy and girl on a Hungarian farm; the setting abounds in local colour, but the spirit is pure English, or rather American, and the story peters out early. The tales of the Taunus Mountains are *soi-disant* folk stories, undistinguished and of course facetious (no one has the courage nowadays to write a serious fairy-tale), but pleasant enough. I can't say as much for *Josephine, A Fairy Thriller*, which deals in a babyish kind of whimsicality, with a lot of sub-Barrie stuff between the author and his small daughter: or for *Somersaults and Strange Company*, a satirical fantasy which has the mark of the intellectual, but no other recommendation—if you call that one.

I had almost forgotten *The Misfortunes of Sophy*. This (the second series by these translators) will make a nice picture-book for the very young—that is, if they can bear poor little Sophy's humiliations, and the cruel laughter which is always sinking her to the ground. But other generations have found it charming, so I suppose there's no need to worry. Only, why bring up tender babes on such English as "they would have liked to have started"?

I have put the two verse books together, which was absurd. *History Through Verse*, written to ease the toils of Smith Minor, should undoubtedly assist his memory—and it may even amuse him, if his sense of humour is very primitive. Whether any parent will give it him in cold blood is another matter. And—to end on a brighter note—there is a picture-book of the year, by Harold Jones, with verses by Walter de la Mare. The pictures are apt to be rather cold and unsympathetic, but some, especially the out-of-door ones, have charm. The rhymes are all charming, and sometimes more than that. This is another book that will keep.

K. JOHN

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knew something about psychology and anthropology to begin with. A list of the things, symbols, myths and books which she found important might seem absurd—but then so would a list of the sources of the ideas which Blake used and was possessed by. With the weakening of the powers of organised religion generally, valid symbols and organisations of symbols into healing ritual have disappeared. Everyone has the opportunity and necessity of making his own Bible, selecting his own tutelary deities and recognising the symbols which have power and meaning in his mind and emotions. The difficulty of this task can be seen in literature in the pilgrimage of Eliot from the eclectic cultural mysticisms of his early work, in the breakdown of Lawrence, in E. M. Forster's curious early preoccupation with dryads, nymphs, and Pan, and in the repeated efforts to make himself a mythology of James Branch Cabell.

Miss Field found herself constantly drawn towards ideas of witchcraft and blood and fire sacrifice. In analysing these interests she quotes or comments on the nature diaries she kept when a child, Groddeck, Stonehenge, *The Golden Bough*, a history of the devil, the horned beasts on the Mappin Terraces, the Grand Canyon, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, the Odyssey, *Within the Gates*, Freud, Ibsen, and the ritual of bull-fighting. On her reactions to all these things she has something keenly felt and clearly observed to express.

On her interest in bull-fighting the writer deserves quotation at length, but two detached passages will have to suffice.

> Blasphemous as it may seem, I had come away feeling as though I had attended the most fully satisfying religious ceremony of my life. I remembered adolescent church-going, and how I could often work myself up to holy feelings and love towards my neighbour and then come home to an inevitable reaction in which I loved nobody and nothing and was filled with petty irritations.
>
> Incidentally, I am told that the Spaniards actually call the plunging of the sword into the bull the moment of truth. Was this first an accident, or was it possible that this was what the Spaniards were acting out Sunday after Sunday in every city of Spain, that one final and inescapable truth of life, the certainty of death? Had they, somehow through those intuitions which shape a culture, made practical application of the truth that psycho-analysis has just been laboriously rediscovering, the truth that fears must be faced, not hidden away?

The results of experiments in free association and free drawing are given fully, and of particular interest is a fairy story written without forethought or criticism in the hope that the tale "would show in allegorical terms just what was going on in the deeper levels of the mind of the writer." This kind of thing is done pretentiously often enough, but Miss Field's story is simple, untouched and good in itself, and her interpretation is convincing without being too ingenious or complete.

The mental gymnastic and philosophy of this experiment are hard to convey summarily. Miss Field believes in introspection and in the keeping of a record of one's spiritual discoveries. She is attracted by quietism and the contemplative life. She believes mystically in an "inner fact" of individual living which escapes identification and in the therapeutic value of a kind of humility, and "acceptance of spiritual poverty," or a willing recognition of the reality of evil, pain, and death. She thinks that her personal need of certain ritual dramatisations for purgation, enlightenment, and motivation may be symptomatic of a general need for public symbols used "in the service of truth of experience."

> Was it not possible that Freud was right, and that man's discovery of reason had, so to speak, gone to his head, with the result that many reformers assumed that it should be possible to make everybody live by reason all the time, when actually the great majority of people can never live by reason, but only by habit and faith.
>
> In democratic countries the most powerful manipulators of vital images seemed to be the film producers, the advertisers and the popular press; and these on the whole manipulated them quite irresponsibly for their own financial advantage, though at times of national stress they were used politically. Under dictatorships vital images seemed used more deliberately for political purposes, primitive images of blood-brotherhood, of blood sacrifice for one's country, of an absolute father-god-dictator at the head of a nation.

Her theory of the value of "negative capability"—of the acceptance of uncertainty—will be unpopular with popular scientists. "For everyone, whether professedly religious or not must have some emotional attitude towards the uncertainties of life, whether he call them Chance or Fate or Destiny or God."

> So the man who heroically repudiates religion in the name of maturity and truth may go through life giving intellectual assent to the scientific view of the universe and still be quite unaware that his feelings, as distinct from his opinions, lacking the educative and purging influence of expression, have remained far more infantile and distorted than those expressed in the forms he has rejected.

This book will be condemned by some because it recommends a mental training impossible for people without some real leisure and economic security. The Gawdsakers ("for God's sake let's *do* something") will have nothing to do with it because it is concerned with individual salvation and polite to contemplative philosophy. Psychologists may dislike it because they know the dangers of their mystery and consider few people capable of operating upon themselves. But no one with a gleam of intellectual curiosity could fail to be interested and impressed by it.

FREDERICK LAWS

A. E.

A Memoir of A E. (George William Russell). By JOHN EGLINTON. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.

The Living Torch, by A E. Edited by MONK GIBBON. With an Introductory Essay. *Macmillan.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. John Eglinton is one of the leading characters in George Moore's *Hail and Farewell*. He is in that book the necessary *advocatus diaboli* of the Irish literary revival, the quiet sceptic who denies the plain existence of fairies, the last remaining Unionist in intellectual circles. Forty-two years ago Mr. Eglinton published two essays of brilliant promise. Otherwise, I should be tempted to suspect from the evidence of this book that he is one more of Moore's invented characters. A semi-official biography is, of course, by its very nature, a dull affair in England. But one would have fancied that a complete Celt like Mr. W. K. Magee (to give Mr. Eglinton his real name), would have broken all the rules and given us an exciting book. He does not believe in A. E.'s mystical philosophy. He is uncertain regarding the ultimate value of his poetry and painting. He is not interested in the fate of co-operation. He distrusts the idealism which in politics and social problems made A. E. a fearless and outspoken champion of truth in a country where moral courage is almost completely absent in public affairs. On the establishment of the Irish Free State Mr. Eglinton, as a sentimental Unionist, left the

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country. He is, therefore, unable really to appreciate those years of struggle, confusion and violence in which, by a gigantic effort of will, this Irish poet laboured weekly in the *Irish Statesman*, which he edited with such skill, for peace, political integrity and liberty of conscience. Mr. Eglinton does not appear, in fact, to like undue excitement or burning indignation, whether the truth is at stake or not. During the famous Larkin Strike of 1912, A. E. created a sensation by his famous "Open Letter to the Masters of Dublin." He created a sensation because, alone among people of authority, he exposed the humbug and hypocrisy of churchmen and politicians at the time. "His courage deserves our admiration," writes Mr. Eglinton, "but truth compels me to add that among his many gifts was not the cool instinct of the public man. He was often inclined to use excited language, and then to profess indignant astonishment that he should be taken for anything but a poet and visionary."

Mr. Eglinton is well-meaning, conscientious and painstaking. He endeavours to give us a portrait of the man. He provides an accumulation of anecdotes, reminiscences of friends and extracts from letters. But he never attempts to analyse or explain the unique personality of this poet who combined mysticism and heroic vision with the practical affairs of the Irish Agricultural Co-operative Movement and of politics. He is dealing with the greatest imagination which has come out of modern Ireland and he might be writing the life of John Redmond or some slightly unorthodox Protestant bishop renowned for his goodness and benevolence. When I say imagination I mean a force and energy of vision which never wavered or was dimmed by the multitudinous contacts of affairs. Personality in modern times is usually a secondary acquisition and does not bear inspection without due notice being given to its bearer. But A. E. was the most approachable of men, and even meeting him for a few moments at a street corner in the rain it was impossible not to become aware of his unfailing inner illumination. The paradox of his simple yet complex personality gives scope even to a sceptic. Mr. Eglinton cannot be quite blamed, since nothing is more difficult to convey to others than the effect of a rare personality and of inspired talk. He perceives that the mystical religion of A. E., his early visional experiences and semi-oriental discipline of the will, are the clue to his influence. But in refusing to investigate fully the elaborate mystical system which underlies A. E.'s poetry and prose he omits, so to speak, the imaginative colouring of his entire portrait.

Mr. Monk Gibbon's biographical essay, which runs to eighty pages, may be described as an unofficial biography. As a poet, Mr. Gibbon is in imaginative sympathy, though not in agreement, with A. E.'s mystical thought, and his essay supplies the colours which are missing from the official biography. Successive generations of Irish writers, whether in prose or poetry, owed much to the imaginative stimulus of A. E., and he was the spiritual centre of the entire literary movement in Ireland. Mr. Gibbon's essay is a tribute to that influence. He is, perhaps, inclined to confuse the mildness and dispassionateness which were a part of the poet's nature with the virtues of essential Christianity. This is because religious fervour and utter faith are not usually associated with literary paganism. But in a country of intensely organised and militant Christianity the unfailing strength of A. E.'s paganism was to the young a highly attractive and informative experience. All the paganism of the past still lingering in vestigial tradition in remote parts of Ireland seemed to be concentrated and living when he spoke on his favourite themes, and his eyes twinkled with genial heresy. Mr. Gibbon has selected essays, sayings and criticisms from the weekly pages of the *Irish Statesman*, all written under the usual disabilities of time and haste. "And yet," remarks Mr. Gibbon:

> Even in his journalism we find traces of the heroic stature of the man. He distilled something of himself into all he wrote. He saw things in their eternal procession. Again and again some profundity would drop from his lips as it were by chance. He was always on the look-out for the liberating thought, something which would release the spirit and start it on a voyage of its own.

The imaginative range, diversity and philosophic calm of these collected pieces will prove that Mr. Gibbon's contention is not an exaggeration.

AUSTIN CLARKE

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Our earliest visitors came as invaders, as pilgrims, as refugees, or to transact business. Thomas Platter, who came to England in 1599, shared none of these motives. He travelled for travel's sake, for the instruction he could gain, and to satisfy an idle and miscellaneous curiosity which stamps him as one of the first authentic tourists. Platter marks the point where the pilgrimage had become so secularised that there was no need even for the religious formality of visiting shrines. The new objects of admiration and wonder were the Tower of London, the royal palaces and the Universities.

Platter saw the sights thoroughly. He was unable to take snapshots, but recorded what he saw in the painstaking way of a schoolgirl writing up a tour of the National Gallery. The marvels of the palaces, the Latin inscriptions, the curiosities of the Tower, all were noted down. Viewed in the perspective of time, the commonplace quality of Platter's observation has a certain charm. History tends to obliterate the man in the street, and this is essentially a pavement view of the Elizabethans.

Platter was privileged to see Queen Elizabeth putting an abrupt end to a sermon, and on another occasion he watched the Queen bless a kneeling crowd at Richmond. His excursions from London took him to Hampton Court, Windsor, Oxford and Woodstock, and he paid close attention to the organs and tapestries and other treasures that were to be seen. These were the high spots of his chronicle, but it is the occasional unpremeditated glimpses of less formal scenes that are now most attractive. At Dover, Platter cured the mayor of a stomach-ache. A visit to the London theatre yielded a performance of *Julius Caesar* (author's name not mentioned); this, indeed, has since proved an important visit, since it has helped scholars to fix a date to the play. When he visited Windsor, Platter wrote his name on the top of the Winchester tower, and at Greenwich he helped himself to a piece of Drake's *Golden Hind* as a souvenir, thereby founding a tradition for latter-day initial carvers and memento-snatchers. It is in incidents such as these that we find, not the tried and familiar proportions of history, but the profuse disorder of the living moment.

Miss Clare Williams contributes an enormous introduction, twice as long as Platter's journal, in which she sketches the background of geographical and sociological inquiry that made up the original context of Platter's publication. The work of Camden,

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Ortelius, Polydore Vergil, Leland and many others is summarised, to produce a composite picture of what was currently known about England. Miss Williams writes with the incandescent and fanatical enthusiasm of a born specialist, so enthralled by her material that she soars into the rhapsodical vein of "Thus have we sauntered by the banks of the river of time." One cannot help feeling that the introduction is a monstrous scaffolding for a very small building, but Miss Williams proffers her considerable erudition so zestfully that she is difficult to resist. Platter is an unimportant figure; yet, in his modest way, he occupies an enchanting corner in the Elizabethan scene. His account of his English tour is itself a pleasant excursion for the idly curious tourist of literature.

A. DESMOND HAWKINS

THE UNKNOWN JEFFERIES

Jefferies' England. Nature Essays by RICHARD JEFFERIES. Edited by S. J. LOOKER. *Constable.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

It is fifty years since Jefferies died. Two books have commemorated his jubilee. The first was Mr. Henry Williamson's selection, reviewed in these pages a few weeks ago. It would be a pity if that book, because it was the first, satisfied curiosity about Jefferies, or made Mr. Looker's selection seem unnecessary. The books have different purposes, and, rather surprising, only two extracts, each short, have been chosen by both editors. The first book showed Jefferies' development from youth to maturity, while the second is compiled entirely from work written in the last ten years of his life—mostly the last four. It is, I think, the more important of the two because it is confined to Jefferies' maturity, the least-known period of his life.

I had always assumed that in the last years of Jefferies' life disease and unhappiness had lessened his vitality and increased his moral cynicism. I was so sure of this that I never troubled to seek out his last essays strewn over five volumes of miscellaneous writings. Mr. Looker's selection of thirty-one essays from these volumes proves that this obscure period contains the best of Jefferies' work, with the exception of *The Story of My Heart*. All that robbed that book of tranquillity was overcome in his last years. Acceptance of an early death must have released in him something at once calm and passionate.

> To be beautiful and to be calm without mental fear is the ideal of nature.
>
> The moment the eye of the mind is filled with the beauty of things natural, an equal freedom and width of view come to it. Step aside from the trodden footpaths of personal experience, throwing away the petty cynicism of disappointed hopes.
>
> The intense feeling caused by the sunshine, by the sky, by the flowers and distant sea is an increased consciousness of our own life. [This is the theme of Jefferies' inspiration.]
>
> Prodigality and superfluity are stamped on everything Nature does. The ear of wheat returns a hundredfold the grain from which it grows. The surface of the earth offers to us far more than we can consume, the grains, the seeds, the fruits. . . . Whenever there is lack among us it is from artificial causes, which intelligence should remove.

I quote these reflective remarks instead of pieces of descriptive writing because this is not merely a nature book; it is philosophy. Nature is in it and Nature is contemplated in it, almost two different things. The early Jefferies tended only to note, catalogue and describe; but the dying Jefferies reflected upon everything he saw as if he felt himself on the verge of discovering a great truth. A brooding wonder sanctifies everything for him.

Many of these essays are written in intense excitement, and though the choice of words and phrases becomes hasty and he lapses into Victorian mannerisms, the sincerity of his ecstasy redeems these faults. He observes as acutely as ever, but he is not delayed by precision. The mind, he says, describing a greyhound, is fascinated by things that move swiftly; when he describes moving things his style sweeps the content along like leaves and branches caught in a cataract:

> Towards dawn, awake again—another change: the battering ram at work now against the walls. Swinging back, the solid thickness of the wind came forward—crush. As the iron shod ram's head hanging from its chains rushed to the tower. Crush. It sucked back again as if there had been a vacuum. . . .

This might have been taken from Hopkins' note books. Some imitators of that poet would have liked to have written the essay in which it appears.

Jefferies' England is pleasantly produced with some delightful photographs; it is cheap for the money. The editor's Foreword points out that in choosing these selections he was aware of the great improvement between the early Jefferies and the later; and he briefly describes the nature of this change without the fantastic comparisons and claims which spoilt Mr. Williamson's book.

It is a book which should extend the influence of a greatly gifted writer.

ROBERT WALLER

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Dr. Mure Mackenzie seldom lets the story of Scotland's woes lose anything in the telling, but once in her latest volume she might almost be charged with understatement. "Not Germany," she says, "has more bitter cause to curse the seventeenth century than our own country." Actually Germany has much less cause for cursing than Scotland, for whatever horrors she suffered during the Thirty Years War, they did not permanently warp and cripple her spirit, whereas Scotland bears cruel marks of her seventeenth-century ordeal to this day, and always will bear them. It is true that when the century opened she was in no very happy case, but she had a national polity that was in process of being consolidated, a Church, and a literary language. A hundred years later she had lost her language, as three generations of her sons had been too busy preaching and cutting throats to write books; and she was so impoverished as to be glad to sell her Parliament to an unwilling buyer. She retained her Church and her law, neither of them at the time an institution to be particularly proud of. The remarkable thing is that to-day Scotland has every reason to be proud of both. Scots Law is more humane and flexible than English, and its practitioners are superior in professional training. The Church of Scotland, despite certain shortcomings as an instrument of religion, is a wonderfully efficient ecclesiastical machine, and it has the best educated ministry in the world.

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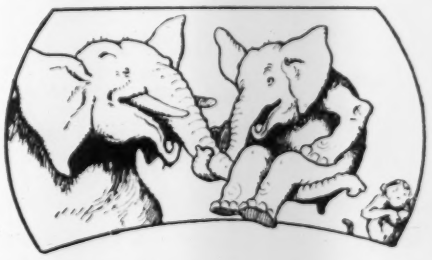

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strong Tory prejudices and a tiresome habit of weeping by the waters of Babylon. But as she also has some historical conscience her story cannot conceal the unhappy truth that the Scottish nation was its own worst enemy. From the accession of Charles I to the Revolution one has the picture of a country dominated by rogues and lunatics, with honest men running hither and thither wailing feebly but incapable of action. Not once, not even in the case of Montrose, can we discern any clear notion of direction, any vision of policy. Montrose's high character and undoubted gifts have induced recent historians to acclaim him as the one man who could have saved the situation in England as well as in Scotland if only he had been better served. A harsher but sounder verdict would be that his political judgment and military talents were alike erratic, and that even if he had escaped tragedy he could not have avoided failure.

In the seventeenth century Scotland and England were faced with the same problem—how to settle the character of their respective Reformed Church establishments. In each establishment there were two parties which may be conveniently, if not accurately, be labelled Right and Left. In each country the parties were pretty evenly matched, but in England there was initial bias to the Right and in Scotland to the Left. In each case the initial bias prevailed in the end: England became Episcopalian and Scotland Presbyterian. But whereas in England the final settlement was reached at the Restoration, the battle in Scotland went on until the Revolution, producing incidents that to this day have given an utterly false colour to the popular history of the period. To this day it is the convention in Scotland to reverence the "martyrs of the Covenant," who in fact were certain dissident West Country fanatics who held to the principles of Harmodius and Aristogiton. Claverhouse, who was not perhaps the best man for delicate police duty, shot a good many of them, but in fairness it must be said that he always gave them the option of abjuring the lawfulness of political assassination. Repressive measures were more humane in those days. But historically these "martyrs" have no part in the Church of Scotland as by law established. They are sanctified by the name of "Covenanters." But, as Dr. Mure Mackenzie shows, the adherents to the Solemn League and Covenant, were a fluctuating body. Under provocation, all the Lowlands would flock to the Covenant standard as the only national rallying point. A year later the Covenant cause would be represented by a handful of crazy field preachers ministering to illiterate Galloway peasants. As a political move the Covenant proved to be a disastrous mistake for Scotland, and it is the easiest of marks for the gibes of writers like Dr. Mure Mackenzie. But in its own time its central idea, the settlement of religion in England and even Ireland on a Presbyterian basis, was regarded on both sides of the Border as a perfectly reasonable programme. Not even those who abhorred it thought it absurd.

Dr. Mure Mackenzie's book makes mixed reading because, as I have said, her prejudices and her conscience are in constant conflict. Her judgments of the main personalities of the period—the two Charleses, Montrose, Argyll, Lauderdale, Claverhouse and the rest coincide with the general judgment of modern historians. She lets her feelings go in reckless casual remarks, as when she charges the Church of Scotland with "violent hostility to the Gaelic language and culture," which is flat nonsense, and laments as an instance of the Anglicising results of the Union the abolition of the abominable old Scots law of treason. She has other crankinesses. An attempt to interpret the past in the terms of the political extravagances of to-day—"fascist," "dictatorship," "counter-revolution," "totalitarian" and all the rest—may be forgiven. It is not so easy to forgive her mixture of English vulgarisms such as "faked" and "come off" with pedantic Scotticisms, mostly terms of legal art the appropriate use of which she does not always understand. She may be forgiven, for patriotism's sake, when she uses Scotticisms in writing of her own country; but one draws the line at being told that Chief Justice Scroggs raved at the "pannels" and that something or other "fluttered the doo-cots." Surely even in these days there are some sanctities. DONALD CARSWELL

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books are most appealing. *Heron's Island* is rather a pleasant continuation of the *Wind in the Willows* tradition, with six dear little animals all acting with gravity and Christian decorum while the humans they meet are made to look perfect beasts. *The Jumping Lions of Borneo*, by J. W. Dunne (of time, etc.), is about some extra intelligent and extra athletic lions. It has some of the *Jungle Book* atmosphere (without the jargon), but it is aimed at a slightly younger audience. *The Disappointed Lion and Other Stories* is a collection of folk stories from Central Africa. In these stories too, animals talk a universal language imposed by the inevitable animism of primitive peoples. John Farleigh (*Black Girl in Search of God*) has decorated the stories with charming drawings, and the tunes which are used by the Bari story-tellers for intoning significant refrains in the stories, are given. *The Magic Poodle* is a dog that talks and can do occasional magic, who imposes a walking tour on two children. I suppose it is a bit whimsy in parts, and the joke occasionally wears a bit thin, but some of the dog's remarks are enchanting—" I'm just being utterly selfish," " Sport doesn't really interest me much "; and I put it a long way above the average for this kind of thing.

But though this formalised animism is often successful, the sentimentality of the usual dog book, in which the imputed emotions are half human and half doggy, is odious. *Scruffy, the Adventures of a Mongrel in Movieland*, is the facetious mock autobiography of a dog that has appeared in several British films. *Turned Adrift* is the biography of a Corgi puppy which emphasises the unhappiness of misunderstood boyhood and an unwanted puppydom. It tends to be sentimental. *More About Dan* is about a gang of dogs whose activities resemble those of Emil and the detectives. The dogs talk among themselves, but not to the human beings, and there is some pretence of realism. The incidents described, the manner and the point of view are all a little dull. *The Long Whip* is an American book. Its hero is a sledge dog who took part in Admiral Byrd's antarctic activities in 1934–1935. The characters of the dogs, and the " almost human " feelings attributed to them take up a lot of space. It is written in a breezy, over-confident, almost familiar style, and is intended for " dog lovers of all ages " rather than children in particular. Sir James and Lady Frazer have dedicated *Pasha the Pom* " to all children and to the grown ups who read it out to them." It is hard to say if the children will like this gentle, old-world, faintly ironical book. Perhaps the presence of the white pom will make up for middle-aged stolidness of the solid French bourgeoisie that it is really about. The illustrations to this book are like frontispieces to pre-war novels, a most curious survival. *Rajah the Elephant* is a little out of place with all those dogs, but one must remember that elephants have many of the British virtues possessed by dogs and ponies. Rajah and his relations talk quite a lot in the early more imaginative part of the book, but by the time he is involved in the Indian Mutiny and the Delhi Durbar, his mahout has the reactions and he gets only prods. It is not a very successful book.

Animals can be used in books as a background for humans. *David's New World* and *Golden Knight and Other Stories* are about nice little folk who love animals and country life. They are also a genteel introduction to blood sports. *We Met Our Cousins* is really better than either of these. Miss Joanna Cannan has gauged her snob appeal perfectly, with a nice blend of Indian army, scholarly laird, vulgar *nouveaux riches* and a little girl who refers to the garments she rides in as her " jodhs." *Sons of Skewbald* is a very individual work. It deals with New Forest ponies, and, indirectly, with some of its author's hobby horses. These include botany, the awfulness of motorists, the niceness of girls whose hair is not cropped short, and so on. *The Five Proud Riders* have adventures where " they take their ponies for a trek through the New Forest." It is all very pukka, very above board, very decent and quite readable. *Dumpling* is an over-fat pony belonging to Annabel Brown, " her father was very rich, she had a car to drive about in and always went abroad in the summer." *Rollo*, a lankier pony, is also owned by a nice young miss. Rollo can talk (though not to humans) and one gathers that he likes gymkhanas, point-to-points and hunting above all.

Books intended for young children have more chance of being reasonably successful. As the need for seriousness increases so does the danger of tediousness. *The Adventures of Boss and the Dingbat*, a collection of photographs of a toy leopard and bear with very slight text is admittedly not an inspired work, but it is agreeable enough in its limited way. *Youth at the Zoo*, a more ambitious work, falls between being too serious for under twelves and not serious enough for over twelves—between an adult

reaction to the animals and a tendency to write down to the children. *London Zoo*, a straight, dispassionate account is far better. M. Boulenger has a great command of his subject and a gift for exposition. For to be impersonal is not enough—*Warden of the Wild* is impersonal and contains a lot of information about animal and bird sanctuaries in various parts of the world. In spite of this it has a stodgy air, it is as rice pudding to the multitude.

GRAHAM BELL

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Dimsie Intervenes. By DORITA FAIRLIE BRUCE. *Oxford.* 5s.

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Growing Up at St. Monica's. By JESSIE MCALPINE. *Oxford.* 5s.

Gillian the Dauntless. By FREDERICA J. E. BENNETT. *Nelson.* 2s. 6d.

What is up with the Girls of England? Where are the merry madcaps whose voices tinkle so agreeably down Memory's Corridor? On reading this year's assortment of books one is aghast at the discovery that gusto has gone, verve has seeped away during the languorous summer months and that now, when put to bed, most of the wretched little softies actually stay there. This will not do at all. Why, in my day we were up and down the church tower twice nightly and had tarred and feathered the school poet into the bargain. We shall soon be in a pretty pass if we send out girls incapable of garotting burglars, foiling desperadoes, or swigging down a stiff dose of sherbert as midnight booms out from the ivy-mantled belfry. They could do it last year well enough. Punctually at half-past ten, they should, by rights, be scuttling through their cuby curtains, making sure that Miss Pringle is busy with the Sand Man, and then away to the moors or the ruined crypt for a few electrifying passages. And back by dawn too, hard at work buttering the stairs outside Mademoiselle's bedroom.

In *Dimsie Intervenes*, the Headmistress has a hard time of it: "My dear . . . I am never off duty except when I'm in bed—and not always then." Some of the girls are keen on their appearances and "eagerly purchase" bath-cubes, freesia soap and bottles of "Anti-Freckle from Boot's." To counteract these there are the Anti-Soppists who troop down to the gym, anxious to "practise those last leg movements of Miss Mallory's." The Seniors have a percussion band in the basement and are often to be found "jazzing away" on their "complicated instruments." The climax is when Dolly Ansell is discovered being laced into a pair of stays in the "lower music-room," where "many dark deeds had taken place."

In *Nancy at St. Brides* there are Helga Grub, "a slim dainty-looking Senior," Betty Muffet, who is alternately "quick-silvery" and "wispish-looking" and Charlotte Truscott, the head girl, who has "exchanged the big glasses of her younger days for a trim pair of pince-nez." The dormitories are named after fruits—Gooseberries, Apricots, Nectarines, etc. Sybil "takes up" Nancy, and even Christine, "yellow hair" and all, is "drawn to her," but Nancy will have none of it—"I think you're a perfect pig, Christine Maclean! The horridest Senior in the whole school!" Nancy is very wild and if she isn't upsetting herself in a canoe or getting cigarettes from the pier, she is in trouble over her "topsy-turvy drawers," or up at the "skreigh of dawn" and painting a skull and cross bones on the school boat. Eyes are hard at it throughout the book, either "smouldering dangerously," "flashing a grateful look," or "shooting a keen glance." And even before the story begins there have been troubles: "It was the summer of the great gale when the san. crashed into the sea—stirring times."

In *Elinor in the Fifth* there are some topping mistresses: Miss Vance, busily occupied with her cyclostyle, the gym-mistress who does "caterpillar crawl down the empty lower corridor to relieve her feelings" and favours "a stiffish brew" of tea, Miss Brown, "young, round and rosy" and the Head herself "in the severely cut coat and skirt that she wore during all but the hottest weather." The book is very go-ahead and there is mention of pictures by Corot, doodles by the Headmistress, and even Clark Gable. There is a tremendous row between Elinor and Rosemary: "She even called me all sorts of things and banged the Lab. door in my face." And there is an unpopular mistress called Miss Ellis who gives the girls what for: "Nobody would think you had just come from a gymnastic lesson. Look at your sitting postures now! Disgraceful!"

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CASSELL

Audrey Trevorne of *Audrey on Approval* has a mother who is "obviously a sport," "the Trevorne eyes, dare-devil blue" and an uncle who is a rich recluse. She visits him in Cornwall whose "glamour . . . wrapped her round," There is much Cornish dialect, bats are referred to as "airy-mice," and a dear old Cornish soul called Mrs. Wherry who throws off: "Its the prattiest sight to see t'mack'rel brought ben." And elsewhere one finds: "Mayhap she's pisky-led . . . wanderin' t'moors under blick o' moon." Audrey's uncle is overcome by fumes from fluids which have "drenched the linoleum" in his laboratory. But Audrey is thoroughly on the spot:

> A towel lay beside a basin of water; she soaked it and flung it dripping round her head. The water trickled down her face and into her eyes, but she did not care.

And goodness me, how Miss May Wynne can write when given half a chance:

> Who minded a scramble when sun-kissed wavelets were dancing over the golden sands.
>
> Evening mists were rising over the moors . . . drawing a mysterious curtain . . . as though pulled by fairy hands, hiding the secrets of the Little People who love the heather and moonshine.
>
> These dear, dear moors! How *could* she leave them?

How indeed.

In *Growing Up At St. Monica's*, the girls have "a keen desire to know more about Nature" and there are some fascinating open-air botany lessons with Miss Telford:

> Ah, I see a sand-martin up by those rabbit-warrens. Miss Telford put her field-glasses up to her eyes and focused them on a grassy knoll.

Eventually they are astonished to see a puffin:

> "Come Agnes. Come Vera. We mustn't lose sight of this elusive bird."

In class, too, she never lets things lag:

> "An order mark for both of you," said Miss Telford grimly, "Hang the map on the board, Kathleen. Marjorie, name the British colonies in Africa. . . . Attention, every one. Sit up straight."

In a book rich in incident and characters we have Miss Denton a wealthy neighbour, who is robbed of her "dear old Russian leather handbag," Vera Winter, the school bowler, who is constantly "loosening up her arm-muscles," and Meg Elliot, who practises Bach fugues on the boot-room piano and announces "a common or garden spot forming on the side of my nose." In this book the school-girl vocabulary is different and one is embarrassed to find the following: "chaps, nope, blimey, sez you, making whoopee, O.K., swell, you're asking me." But Miss Jessie McAlpine can be thoughtful too:

> Some people would laugh if you asked them to play a game of cricket by themselves, yet they think nothing of playing the game of life single-handed.

In *Gillian the Dauntless* we meet a highly-strung Russian girl called Mystica Dégris who gives "a long shuddering sigh that shook the girl from head to foot." She is steeped in mystery, captured by Bolshevists in Paris and has eyes that make one think "of vast forests with pathways strewn with countless years of pine needles." She appears in four pictures, being tripped up by wire, examining a padlocked parrot's cage, peering nervously from a window, and being knocked down by a motor-car, in colours.

Girls, shie away your bath-cubes and freesia soap. A moonlit night and a rope ladder was all your mothers ever needed to make them happy. And give those stays to Mademoiselle.

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FRANCESCO ANSWERED

Fear Came on Europe. By JOHN T. WHITAKER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10s. 6d.

This is another inquest on peace, by one who had a more or less reserved seat at its slaughter. Mr. Whitaker, European correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, won the newspaperman's race to Makale with the Italians, and his opening chapter is fine unsentimental war correspondent's stuff, with no nonsense about the good manners and morals of the Abyssinians. Then he went south to look at Graziani's campaign, and was driven about Ogaden by Francesco, who is responsible for this book. Francesco, aged 20, from the Abruzzi, had malaria and no chance of becoming a war hero. In Mr. Whitaker's company he became nostalgic and inquiring. Mr. Whitaker knew about the world, and was of a country which had all the fine things which Italy lacked. What about war, then, which Mussolini said was good (and Mussolini is always right), but which the priest said was bad? Is war the way to get on with the world? This shook what Mr. Whitaker calls his "cynicism and disillusionment, those whores of journalism who debauch the truth." Francesco asked for news, but not the newspaper story of which Mr. Whitaker after five years of European capitals had become a master. To answer Francesco (and he had to answer him) this news would have to be late but right. Francesco would have to be shown those who make war in the temple of peace.

So back we go five years to Mr. Whitaker's arrival, glowing with liberal-American aspirations, at Geneva. Almost at once the roses faded. Lord Cecil, addressing the Council, looked back on twelve years of solid League building, averred that war was never more remote than at that moment, and pleaded for economic co-operation. Ten days later the Japanese had moved upon Manchuria, and Britain, loudly roaring, had in effect saved the pound at the expense of other currencies by going off gold. Mr. Whitaker soon saw that the only people at Geneva who knew what a real League should be at and worked stealthily and unavailingly for it were the Secretariat; the rest were realists. He makes a pretty picture of the diplomatic parade arriving for a session, with peace, co-operation and covenanting on their lips and sovereign interests bulging from their portfolios. For months he watched the interlocked manoeuvres of bandits (old style, reformed) keeping the League's machinery safely out of action upon bandits (new style, extremely touchy), as they mopped up Manchuria. For equal months he "covered" Disarmament, of which he says that no one wanted disarmament but everyone wanted disarmament conferences, on the principle of the Jew-boy who kept on changing a dollar into cents and back again, because he was sure that someone would make a mistake and it wouldn't be he. After that, in search of something to believe in, Mr. Whitaker toured the capitals. In Moscow he shied away from Communism, which seemed to him merely the ascendency of 3 millions over 160 millions. June 30th, 1934, the first of Hitler's pleasant Saturday afternoons, took him to Berlin; the assassination of Dolfuss to Vienna. He went to Rome expecting to abhor Mussolini, and returned almost captivated by the man himself and by his power over his Francescos. And so Mussolini and Francesco between them lead Mr. Whitaker to his conclusion, that all might yet be well if the demands of the "have-nots" to expand were met by honest sacrifices on the part of the "haves."

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The world is full of Francescos of all nationalities, some of whom will presently be in Francesco's situation, all of whom are as feverish as he with desperate questions. One must, I suppose, go on invoking the mysterious workings of democracy on the one hand, and the evident compulsions of dictatorship on the other. But Mr. Whitaker answers a good many questions by letting readers have a good look at the people who occasion them. There is no comfort in this book; no comfort, but hard facts, and a bracing bitterness of wit, which, blowing away the miasma of loud and empty words, gives stoicism strength to put on its gas-mask.

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Other firms which supply the same sort of cards in less profusion are: Heffers, Cambridge; much gayer than last year, a mountain village under snow by Clifford Webb is the best. The Challenge, Ltd., 92 Great Russell Street; a set of six snow scenes delicately photographed.

As a contrast to modern tastefulness, the Medici Society and the two Museums continue to offer at absurdly cheap prices small reproductions of masterpieces. The superb "Winter Landscape," by Breughel (Medici) makes a perfect Christmas card; one cannot imagine anyone receiving it without a thrill of pleasure. Medici have also a delightful eighteenth-century scene of the Elephant and Castle crowded with vehicles going to and coming from Brighton. It is described as being "after John Pollard" and has the merit of being unfamiliar. A seventeenth century map of Middlesex and a Van Eyck altar-piece, Mother and Child, catch the eye as cards one has not seen in previous years.

The Victoria and Albert Museum have—besides a Rowlandson, a Cotman, and the now popular Indian cranes—several delicious surprises. "Chasse de Compaigne," a wallpaper attributed to Carl Vernet (c. 1814) combines the redcoats and horses with a picnic-like grace and landscape which enchant. Nobody should miss seeing this card. A plate from Audubon's *Birds of America* and a coloured woodcut of the Ark (Nuremburg bible, 1483) should be noted in the same series.

The British Museum set now contains twenty-five cards. The most fastidious taste will be answered here. We recommend especially the coloured woodcut by Hokusai "Bird on a Rose-tree Branch"; the Hunting Scene, French early XVth Century; and "Mochizuki: Moonlight," by Hiroshige.

Many of these would hardly be recognised as Christmas cards by our great-grandmothers if they could see them. Book tokens, even, take the form of Christmas cards from which one tears 7*s.* 6*d.* worth from the inside; and now E.M.G., who till this year sold exchange cheques as presents, have a Christmas card with a woodcut of the famous horn on the front, which one fills in to any amount when one buys it. For musical friends no better Christmas card than an E.M.G. record token could be imagined.

What else for the mantelpiece? Well, there is an eight-page history in pictures of the Zebra which will give pleasure to all except strict Lamarckians (Chatto, 1*s.*), and a series of six charming booklets (poems by Shakespeare, Donne, Marvell, Keats, essays by Addison, Steele and Cobbett), also published by Chatto at a shilling each. Or there is always the stationer's two-penny tray.

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A FAMILY GROWS UP

The Pasquier Chronicles. By GEORGES DUHAMEL. *Dent.* 10s. 6d.

Two more short novels have been added to the Pasquier cycle, and it can now be read in one volume of 840 pages. Warmly one hopes that this is not the end. If it is the reader will have some right to say that certain promises have not been fulfilled and that he is left in the air. There is such will to survive in these people. Dr. Raymond Pasquier still embarrasses his family with his methodical *amours*, and, strictly to time-table, goes the round of his mistresses. The neat but wayward doctor, it will be remembered, was inclined to public flashes of temper and would, for example, march his family off a bus, indignantly protesting, if he saw a passenger picking his nose or otherwise offending an incalculable sensibility. The doctor's capacity for scenes still causes family uneasiness; and with justification, for in the first of the two new books, he hacks a water main with a chopper and nearly drowns his landlord; and in the second, he is badly damaged in an assault on a policeman. But Dr. Pasquier is soon out of bed and, though a bit shaky on his legs, he is off like a sleek young gamecock after his favourite hen. No, he is far from finished. He will live to assault more landlords, neglect his practice, invent more patent draught preventers and, with a certain sleepy mockery, will give his severe and horrified sons and daughters many more bad quarters of an hour. Madame Pasquier, too, has long years before her. But French literature is a literature of moralists, as M. Duhamel remarked in an early preface; and the young stand still. Their moral pattern is fixed as moral patterns pretty generally are in French fiction, and the novelist is really left to rework old ground. Joseph, the successful business-man, is perhaps more floridly the go-getter; Cécile, the musician, has discovered her own coldness of heart; Laurent, ruled by dread of being like his father, finds in an almost monastic view of science and an obviously self-imposed frustration in love and friendship, two ways of "expiating the sins of les Pasquiers." The Raymond Pasquiers of this world bequeath their spiritual liabilities to their children. So a noticeable lowering of temperature has caught them after the third volume, just as it caught *Salavin*; I don't mean that it is too long, as *Salavin* was; but the theme has halted and is to some extent side-tracked. The warmth the family had in the restricted space and curiously exciting monotony of family life leaves them when they get out into the world, and they halt, shivering in its bleakness.

In the last book, except when the final flare up of the doctor throws its embarrassing light on them, they are in the background. Justin Weill, the ugly, theatrical, passionate and tortured little Jew, has the centre of the stage. In the outer suburbs he and a group of intellectuals take a large damp house, grandiloquently renounce a decaying civilisation—this is before 1914—and, like a set of Bouvards and Pécuchets, experience the comi-tragic disillusion of Utopians. Here M. Duhamel is returning to the theme of *Salavin*. Weill is another saint. "You think, you people of another creed, that you understand Jesus. But not a bit of it. He was one of us, just a little Jew like me." In the end, in the wretched, half-empty house, which the others have abandoned for new wives or new jobs, Weill sees his vision of a free, communal life vanish. The November rain drips; the new world ecstasy of the spring, when one of them had even suggested suicide out of sheer joy of living, is a memory. There is more strength and warmth in one muddle of the Pasquiers than in the ideal of human dignity and freedom, Laurent reflects; and listens to his friend sobbing out his Gethsemane through the night.

The Weill portrait is superb. M. Duhamel is not a genial novelist, but a contemplative one who notes small things in the bleak spaces of time. He moves backwards and forwards, taking from the future as well as from the past of his people, suggesting them on general lines so that at first they have the versimilitude of people we know but who we are not stirred to penetrate; then, suddenly, what seemed to be merely still and precise Dutch painting suddenly rustles with sharp and revealing movement. M. Duhamel is a faithful recorder of the ordinary, because he never overlooks the surprising. Carefully he prepares for those brilliant moments when human beings reveal themselves. Monotony and surprise—one sweetens, one sharpens the other. How delicate his palate is! Weill, and Cécile whom he longs to marry, stand out unforgettably in their scenes; merely differentiated characters before, such as any shrewd and clever maker of comedies might have observed, they receive the stamp of the spirit. They are separate, mutually incomprehensible beings.

The theme which has been side-tracked after the third volume is the one promised in the preface to *News from Havre* and which has, oddly enough, been withdrawn from this new edition. I mean the intention to record the early struggles and rise of a class. The little bourgeois emerging painfully from his peasant past, working himself to the bone and appearing at last as the scientist, the business-man, the artist, the leading figure of his time—this was the theme which gave definition to the earlier books. It is there in the last book when the Utopians make their gesture, I suppose, but watered down. On the one side the will, the intellect, declaring their freedom from money; on the other, money (in the shape of the egregious brother Joseph) declaring that it will soon make short work of this airy talk of free science and pure art, by buying both. This, in the third volume, was the real climax of the chronicle, and I would have sacrificed some of the troubles of the wood-sawing Tolstoyans of Bievres, to have seen the consequences.

V. S. PRITCHETT

UNHEARD-OF ADVENTURES

Michael Bakunin. By E. H. CARR. *Macmillan.* 25s.

History of Anarchism in Russia. By E. YAROSLAVSKY. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 2s. 6d.

Mr. Carr has written a model biography; indeed, it may be said that the life of Bakunin has now been finally written. That it should have been written by an Englishman is extraordinary, for it could not have been done without an extremely wide and deep knowledge of Russian and other foreign languages. This Mr. Carr possesses, and, that being so, his insularity is an advantage, for he brings to his task a certain aloofness and objectivity which no Russian or Continental biographer would probably have to the same extent. Very few Russians, Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, or Spaniards—as we can see in the state of Europe to-day—have altogether escaped infection from the ideological viruses of Marxism and Bakunism and the toxins and anti-toxins of capitalism, whereas the Englishman's disinclination to think has conferred upon him some measure of immunity. Mr. Carr seems to enjoy the best of

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both worlds, for he combines the immunity with a distinct inclination and capacity for thought. His impartiality is remarkable and it is combined with a no less remarkable sympathetic understanding of all kinds of human beings and their emotional and intellectual eccentricities. The result is not only a fascinating biography of Bakunin, but also an admirable account of the social and political doctrine of anarchism with which his name is historically associated. This doctrine and its translation into political practice are also dealt with summarily by Yaroslavsky, but there is little objectivity in his book, for it is written by a good Communist whose business it is to show that the anarchist is always wrong and the Communist always right.

That any doctrine at all emerged out of the head and life of Michael Bakunin was an accident; that he should have been the protagonist in an ideological duel with Marx which was the death-blow to the First International was one of those superbly fantastical incidents which seem to prove conclusively that history is a farce, full of sound and fury, directed by some cynical demon. In the extravaganza of Bakunin's life and European history between 1840 and 1875 even Mr. Carr cannot explain why things happened, but at least for the first time, owing to his skill and research, one can understand how they happened. Bakunin, as everyone knows, was an anarchist and the founder of the modern doctrine of anarchism. This bald statement is, no doubt, true, but it has little significance and no importance. Bakunin's connection with thought, theory, or doctrine is, as was said, accidental, for his mind was perpetually in a state of excited muddle. In 1843 he read in a now forgotten book by Wilhelm Weitling the statement that "the perfect society has no government, but only an administration, no laws, but only obligations, no punishments, but means of correction." Up to that time his natural inclination for disorderly rebellion against any kind of authority or restraint had made him a vague revolutionary and a sympathiser with oppressed nationalists. Weitling's conception of a society without government offered broader vistas of revolution extremely congenial to him, and there is no doubt that it was from this that he evolved in later years his doctrine—in so far as it was a doctrine—of anarchy. The personality of Marx, his method of scientific analysis, his materialism, his insistence upon the conflict of economic class interests, were antipathetic to the disorderly romanticism of Bakunin. Actually the struggle between them within the International was a personal one, the struggle between two masterful personalities for the control of a machine; the ideological conflict remained in the background and was fully developed only by their disciples.

Mr. Carr's book is intensely interesting on the side of history, the history of political ideas and of the early days of socialism. But it is even more interesting psychologically, as the study of a remarkable person. Bakunin was a great character, and he dominated people and has made an impact on history, not by his mind, his thought, or even his acts, but by his character. His character was fantastic and so his life was fantastic. The key to both was his romanticism. In his "Confession" to the Tsar he wrote: "The radical defect in my nature" is "a love of the fantastic, for unusual, unheard-of adventures which open up vast horizons and the end of which cannot be foreseen." Lesser men in their tens of thousands have this love too and live out their lives in impeccable respectability and dullness; in Mr. Carr's brilliant biography you can read how a man of violent passions, of tremendous energy and dominating will, actually lived a life of unheard-of adventures. The facts in themselves are interesting enough, but what makes the story doubly fascinating is the strange, tangled psychology of Bakunin. Those who have a love of the fantastic, the unusual, the unheard-of adventures of the human mind will find all that they hope for in Mr. Carr's account of this impotent, violent, cowardly, brave, childish, cadging, generous, lying, aristocratic, ridiculous great man.

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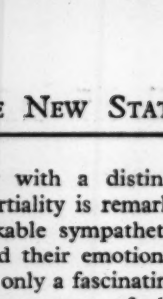

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THE END OF THE ZEPPELIN IDEA

Zeppelin. By CAPT. ERNST A. LEHMANN. *Longmans.* 15s.

This book has more than the pathos of the merely posthumous. It is written in a spirit of buoyant and infectious optimism by a man who had earned his right to be confident, for he grew up with the Zeppelin idea, was a leader and a survivor of its wartime adventures, and having seen it through the financial, political and technical crises of its later development, thought the way was now reasonably clear for the airship as, in every sense, a self-supporting vehicle of long-range transport. Lehmann wrote his book when the *Hindenburg*, a bigger and surely a better airship than the *Graf Zeppelin* with its grand record of reliability in service all over the world, was doing well on its first Atlantic crossings. But the *Hindenburg* let him down. It collapsed in flames while making a perfectly normal landing at Lakehurst and in thus placing the latest of a long series of dismal queries against riding the air on a gasbag, destroyed not only its commander, Lehmann, but a great deal of the argument of the book he had just finished. The story is rounded off by Commander Rosendahl, who watched the *Hindenburg* disaster and writes an illuminating report of what he saw. He buries Lehmann with full literary honours and does his best not to bury the future of Zeppelins with him. It is related that as Lehmann was dragged away from the burning ship he could only repeat, "I don't understand it." There seems to be as yet no evidence that anyone else is in a better position.

Lehmann's book is a good deal of a glorious muddle. It is the hastily contrived work of a man who knows what he is writing about and occasionally writes very well, but, being short of time, shoves everything in unsorted and leaves the events, and his own enthusiasm in their recollection, to drag the reader along. He runs on across the giddy ups-and-downs of twenty-five years of airship flights with a cheerful disregard for chronology, proportion, or even (as in this vision of the inflation of the *Graf Zeppelin*) the niceties of mixing metaphor: "Like God's apprentice, midget man was blowing breath into his gigantic creation; the gas hissed through the umbilical cords into the huge body." I took what I was given—the early days at Friedrichshaven with Count Zeppelin, the air raids over Britain, the shackles of Versailles, the spread of construction to England and America, the triumph of the *Graf Zeppelin* on the North and South Atlantic routes—in the hope that I should ultimately be given what I most wanted—a pause, and a logical analysis of the merits and demerits of the Zeppelin as an aircraft. This never came. But even those with no technical interest in the long argument between aeroplane and

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airship will find in this twisted and confusing narrative a startling impression of the sheer tenacity of the Zeppelin idea. Count Zeppelin started something technically vital which has survived in a very curious way the worst assaults of accident and popular caprice. It is the plain truth that the Zeppelin crews nosing westward on moonless nights twenty years ago, against unknown weather, formidable defences and the hatred of their intended victims, were brave and resolute men operating a brilliantly improvised feat of engineering. When that grim game was ended they had not had enough of airship travel. They conspired and failed to inaugurate trans-Atlantic travel by airship, but Zeppelin construction survived in the *Los Angeles*, spread and was crippled in Britain and America, and was resuscitated in Germany where a period of great success is now closed by the loss of the *Hindenburg*. Disasters continue, politicians and financiers blow hot and cold on the embers of airship development; but the hierarchy of Zeppelin technical knowledge, which remains the basis of airship construction wherever it is attempted, is not yet broken.

Briefly and in cold blood the facts about the post-war Zeppelin appear to be these. The obstacles to its progress are structural failure and lack of control in stormy weather, and fire risks, each of which can be minimised by expert navigation and operation of the standard achieved for instance by the men under Dr. Eckener. The R38, the *Akron* and the *Macon* were lost through structural weakness, the *Hindenburg* ostensibly through fire, the R101 through structural weakness followed by fire. Against these stands only one conspicuous success, the *Graf Zeppelin*. It may, I think, be argued that the picture looks blacker than perhaps it really is, because it contains so few instances. If it were as easy to build and operate a fleet of Zeppelins as it is to produce a squadron of aeroplanes, the statistics of large-scale operations might be much more comforting. However that may be, the *Hindenburg* affair has settled the doubts about hydrogen as the supporting gas. Helium must lift the future Zeppelin, and as America owns the world's helium supply the next step rests with her. Commander Rosendahl believes that the next step will be made, and I am inclined to agree with him.

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THE MORNING AFTER

Italy Against the World. By GEORGE MARTELLI. *Chatto and Windus.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The War in Abyssinia. By PIETRO BADOGLIO. *Methuen.* 30*s.*

John Melly of Ethiopia. By KATHLEEN NELSON and ALAN SULLIVAN. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The time is, alas, far distant when anyone is likely to write a judicial and non-polemical account of the Ethiopian affair. Even in Africa the business is not yet complete, while in Europe it has merged inevitably into the Spanish war. Mr. Martelli was diplomatic correspondent for the *Morning Post*, and he served that paper well in its long struggle against the League of Nations. He has now described again, ably and concisely, the lamentable shifts, compromises, and evasions of the leading democratic countries when they were faced by a direct challenge. He finds an easy quarry in the solemn pomposities and basic feebleness of so many League of Nations supporters in this country. The purpose of the book is to plead for an understanding with Italy, and the forgetting of a past in which Europe can take little pride—the familiar thesis of the *Observer* and the *Daily Mail*, but more succinctly and intelligently stated.

As a writing of contemporary history the book is vitiated by the assumptions which are typified by the question-begging title. It is precisely because Italy was *not* against the world that events took the course which they did. Not only were certain countries supporting Italy, but the democratic countries were hopelessly divided. In England as well as in France a large and influential section of the public thought that Italy was justified, and wished her well. Mr. Martelli states at one point that "apart from the Pacifists, Die-Hards and Isolationists, the country was solid for the League." No one with practical knowledge of English politics in 1936 would accept this statement. Quite apart from the question of collective security there were active supporters of Italy holding key positions in the Cabinet, the press, the Foreign Office, and in the City. Many were Catholics, some were of Italian origin or had Italian connections, some, like Mr. Bernard Shaw, supported white as against black men without being necessarily "die-hard." They could get all the publicity they needed, and as in the Spanish affair it had its effect.

One has the same exasperated feeling of unfairness in reading Marshal Badoglio's book. It is admirable from every technical standpoint. The panoramic photographs give a marvellous impression of the extraordinary country north of Addis Ababa. It is a soldier's book, giving a workmanlike account of a difficult job, efficiently carried out, and is a remarkable contrast to De Bono's garrulous and feeble *Anno XIII*, a contrast which helps to explain certain aspects of the war. But the errors and omissions are remarkable, and the author stops at the fall of Addis Ababa as do other Italian writers of war books. Badoglio gives some credit to the *askaris*, but not a real description of the part they played. The bombing of villages and use of poison gas are not mentioned, and the reader would get a totally false impression of the numerical inferiority of the Ethiopians, and the poverty of their weapons. Of more general interest is Marshal Badoglio's analysis of the Emperor Haile Selassie's strategy, and the probable forces which influenced it. Those who saw something of the war from the other side will probably agree as to its accuracy. The Italians overestimated the primary weakness and divisions of the Ethiopians, perhaps because they did not understand the hatred and contempt which the Amharic people felt for the country which they had beaten at Adowa, but Abyssinia was still too feudal to fight a long defensive war.

Mr. Martelli describes the bombing of Dr. Melly's unit near Quoram in March, and his verdict is interesting as coming from a man closely in touch with Italian opinion, and in favour of an Italian understanding:

> It is generally assumed that the Italian motive in destroying the unit was to eliminate European witnesses of the use of poison gas. Dr. Melly and his companions had been treating gas cases at the rate of eighty to a hundred a day, and it was evidently undesirable from the Italian point of view that they should continue to accumulate such damaging evidence. And yet, short of killing every white member of the unit, which was unlikely, it was impossible to prevent the truth from coming out. . . . It seems more probable that the raid was just a sheer piece of "frightfulness" with hatred of the English as an additional incentive.

Dr. Melly's own account is given in the very restrained and admirable memoir compiled by two of his friends. The bombing occurred very soon after the killing of Major Burgoyne, and

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Mr. Martelli probably underestimates the deliberate and systematic efforts of the Italians to destroy any channels through which the outside world might learn about their methods of fighting or their subsequent efforts at colonisation. In this they have been assisted by the British Government, which has allowed its nationals to be turned wholesale out of the country, and did not protest against the holocaust at Addis Ababa of all who had any connections with Europe or knowledge of foreign languages. Men like Dr. Melly are really survivors of an earlier England, which sent its doctors and missionaries out into the world, and saw that they had honour not only in their own country but also abroad. To-day everything is done officially to damp down humanitarian efforts, and it is typical that Lord Halifax, with Sir Sydney Barton's full report and Melly's evidence before him, should have said that the Government had insufficient evidence of the use of mustard gas. Dr. Melly was a man of extraordinary personal charm as well as unlimited courage. In better times he, and those who worked with him, would have had better recognition.

G. T. GARRATT

THEY LAUGHED AT FLEET STREET

Press Gang. By VARIOUS AUTHORS. *Hutchinson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Our popular press is no laughing matter. No sane satirist could hope to write anything more preposterous than the normal contents of almost any of our national newspapers. Parody is only valuable when the victim of parody is not beneath contempt. These platitudes are offered as partially explaining why *Press Gang* is not as satisfying a book as *Parody Party*, which a similar group of writers produced last year. However, now that we are all journalists, who else is there to be parodied?

Press Gang begins with "A Hygienic New Year to All," which is a *Times* leader by Mr. J. B. Morton, who upholds a high tradition of baseless optimism and padded prose. It ends with a *Times* leader by Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis on The Abolition of Christmas. In between there are several hardy perennials like The Twelfth Once More, Ascot—the Cement of Empire, and the Royal Academy, and a number of those splendid regular features beside which advertisers are happy to buy space.

E. M. Delafield's *Femina's Supplement* is murder at its best. Someone should make Miss Delafield editress of a high-class woman's weekly rich in patterns, serials, and free advisory booklets at once. Mr. Francis Iles has done a legally flawless obscenity prosecution of the Song of Songs, which is well bolstered with the genuine *obiter dicta* of moral magistrates. Father Ronald Knox provides a full newspaper history from our own correspondent of an American prophet of human sacrifice. Mr. John Betjeman lets our greater film critics loose on a screen version of Shakespeare's *Calphurnia*. Mr. Cyril Connolly's not-so-fantastic history of the progress of a charming intellectual from Eton to Parton Street is not a parody at all, but it is the rudest and best thing in the book. (Apparently it once took up the whole of a N*w St*t*sm*n Autumn Books Supplement.) The Sunday memoirs of the great, the powerful correspondents of the editor of the *Times*, the name-made news which makes its readers wish that "Time" really would march on, the sporting pages and the gossip column—these are manhandled by Messrs. Macdonell, D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Timothy Shy, J. B. Morton, Edward Shanks, Dilys Powell, Leonard Russell, and friends.

The only grave omission from a book which should save many people the trouble of reading the papers for years was the comic column. Surely J. B. Morton could have been horrid to Beachcomber, or D. B. Wyndham Lewis could have insulted Timothy Shy.

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REVISION?

Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and its Consequences, 1919-1937. By C. A. MACARTNEY. *Oxford* 25*s.*

This book constitutes an admirable and long-needed guide-book for all those who venture into the tortuous labyrinth of that confusing area once united in allegiance to the Holy Crown of St. Stephen. Vexed question after vexed question is examined with accuracy, feeling and justice. Mr. Macartney, for instance, provides an analysis of unprecedented lucidity of the intricate relation of the Czechs to the Slovaks and the battle of the Czecho-Slovak hyphen. In spite of a disarming foreword, it should perhaps be pointed out that Košutic, not Maček, married a daughter of Radic.

In view of Mr. Macartney's sympathy—if measured—for Hungary, his tributes to the Czechs are striking. "Centuries of existence within the Austrian State," he writes, "and of contact with its more advanced elements, have imbued them with a respect for legality, an aversion from extreme methods, a civilised attitude which their worst enemies must acknowledge." Apart from the fact that their worst enemies conspicuously fail to acknowledge these things, it is interesting that Mr. Macartney confirms the view that the Slovaks of to-day are more intolerant towards their Magyar minority than the Czechs, who have internationally to bear the brunt of the new Slovak assertiveness towards the Magyars together with a pretty cool attitude towards the Czechs themselves. In a very revealing passage in the section on Transylvania, the relative hardship inflicted on their Magyar subjects by the nations of the Little Entente is summed up: "'The corruption of the Roumanians,' said an old Jew to me, cynically, 'is our Geneva.' Moreover the average Roumanian is an easy-going fellow. He is not brutal by nature; he does not even require very heavy bribing. . . . Even unbribed, he will often waive the strict application of some burdensome regulation, especially if it would cause him trouble to enforce. He lacks altogether the iron tenacity and national purposefulness of the Czech, or the brutal forcefulness of the Serb."

Mr. Macartney does not believe that its unity should be disturbed nor that Transylvania could be restored to Hungary. In actual practice he believes only in frontier adjustments here and there, to include the oft-discussed return of the Great Schütt Island, and further he considers that economic grounds in particular would justify the return of Ruthenia to Hungary. "If this were done," he writes, "it would be essential, in order to prevent a renewal of Magyarisation to which the Ruthenes would no longer submit, to have a resident international commissioner, acting either for the League of Nations or for the Powers, in Ruthenia." In view of the complete breakdown in international organisation which has just been demonstrated in Danzig, this project seems rather Utopian than practical nowadays.

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Indeed, apart from the fascination which the centripetal forces of old Hungary have for him, Mr. Macartney has nothing to say about Hungary's past or present which is at all reassuring to those who might consider the desirability of revision in her favour. The Hungarians, like the Austrian Germans, came near to successful assimilation of the Slavs, but they began too late—it was probably a hopeless project once Herderism had escaped control. The Austrians, thereupon, introduced a gradual and perhaps too grudgingly granted system of rights for their Slavs, a system which might have worked well had it not been for Hungary. I think I have never met an Austrian or ex-Austrian German, however sober or however Slavophobe, who did not primarily blame Hungarian national and social intolerance for the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire. As Dr. Renner pointed out in his most famous pre-war publication, the Leitha frontier between Austria and Hungary was unnatural and ridiculous. In Cis-Leithan Austria, Germans were dominant over Czechs, Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Roumanians, Ruthenes and Italians, with semi-privileged Poles, while in Hungary Magyars were dominant over Germans, Slovaks (some with pro-Czech sympathies), Serbs, Roumanians, Ruthenes, a few Italians in Fiume, with semi-privileged Croats who were sympathetic to the Serbs and Slovenes. However tolerant the Germans in Austria, they were constantly disturbed by the repercussions from the indignation of the Slavs and Roumanians of Hungary. Nothing that Mr. Macartney can tell us suggests that the Hungary of to-day has really freed itself from its oligarchic traditions which embittered the Magyar-Slav or Magyar-Roumanian situation by making it, more often than not, a matter of the Magyar magnate dealing with his underlings. Mr. Macartney supplies most valuable evidence to the effect that the inscrutable Magyar peasantry of Southern Slovakia, in spite of material advantages under the present regime, would vote for Hungary in a plebiscite. But he is compelled in honesty to write that the poor in Hungary itself "have never been encouraged to talk much anyway, and they may even regret the extreme vigour with which the revision campaign is prosecuted as . . . providing . . . too easy an opportunity for diverting attention from social problems within the country." As for the German minority in Hungary, members of the Austrian Delegation used, when they travelled to Budapest in the old days, to be horrified by the Magyarisation they were forced to observe, and the post-war "affaire Bleyer" carried on the tradition. To-day it is difficult not to sympathise with the Hungarians, especially in view of the German flirtation with Roumania, if they are frightened into indiscretion by the Nazi shadow across Central Europe, a shadow which threatens to blot out for many years to come that Eastern Switzerland of which all enlightened historians have dreamt, from Palacký to Eisenmann and Macartney.

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Boadicea. By LEWIS SPENCE. *Robert Hale.* 12s. 6d.

It would be hard to find a more romantic story—in outline—than that of Louise de Stolberg, Countess of Albany. At nineteen she became Queen of England *de jure*, and to a wide circle of admirers "the Queen of Hearts." Her marriage turned out as ill as possible: before long everyone was pitying the gay and lovely young creature, who led such a life with that absurd husband. Then her charms and wrongs attracted the notice of a great poet. Alfieri had been in love before—frantically, sensationally in love—but never, as he recognised, with a worthy object; now he had met his affinity. Their friendship, however, remained innocent and intellectual till, three years later, Louise's husband all but strangled her in a drunken fury. Alfieri then helped her to escape; she fled to a convent, and ultimately to her deliverer. And they never parted again.

It sounds well, especially as the knight-errant was a handsome and fiery young patrician, and the captive princess a beauty—with dark blue eyes, fair hair, and a skin "white as an English girl's." But all romance has its less poetic side. That had been Louise's own view when she accepted Bonnie Prince Charlie, who was fifty-two at the time, and who had spent the last quarter-century and more falling out with everyone, till now he had scarcely a friend left in the world but "that horrid bottle." Of course, she did not know all about him. No one had mentioned his unsavoury habits, his impossible temper, his raving jealousy; and her experience of married life must have been a shock. But on the other hand, Charles, expecting and feeling himself entitled to a Griselda, had caught a tartar: who would have credited this young, convent-bred girl with so sharp and ironical a tongue, and so little feeling? While they were together, Louise quarrelled with him "bitterly and blatantly day and night," and even after her escape it never occurred to her to waste pity on the ex-hero; his situation, she observed coolly, was very miserable, but it was all his own fault. Meanwhile, having got away, she could enjoy the social and other advantages of his rank without debt or drawback—and she proceeded to do so.

The main chance was, in fact, her guiding star throughout life; it presided even at her elopement. On that dramatic occasion, she burned no boats; there was her allowance to think of, and her jointure annuity, and her pension from the French King. Moreover, she did not intend to be a social outcast, for Alfieri or anyone. So the affair had to be managed, and was managed, with the utmost respectability—under the aegis of her brother-in-law the Cardinal, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Holy Father himself. This, of course, meant an indefinite parting of the lovers, which she regretted: but safety first.

Everyone had taken it for granted they would marry on Charles's death; they never did marry, but their union was quite as humdrum (under the surface) as any legal one, and quite as indissoluble. Louise had really no taste for escapades; she was not a passionate woman, and being now established as the idol and inspiration of a genius she stuck to that. As for Alfieri, passions or no passions, he stood committed; he had ranted so much about this, his first *dégno amore*, and its undying character, that any visible backsliding would have lessened him for ever in his own eyes. Louise's fresh, round-faced beauty had faded early, and she didn't much care—she thought far more of her library than of her wardrobe, when youth was past; but stout and dowdy, "German and ordinary," as she now was, he loved her with unflagging ardour (in theory, and despite various little affairs on the side) until his last breath.

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The Countess survived him more than twenty years. She lived to read *Waverley*, and see her own husband a character in historical fiction; she lived to become something of a joke with the English tourists in Florence, as we know from a malicious story of Lady Blessington's. "One Englishwoman asks another: 'Who is this lady, in whom people show such interest?' 'Why, is it possible that you do not know? Well, for my part, I thought everyone was aware that the Countess of Albany, as they call her, is the widow of King Charles I, and the lady of whom the celebrated Ariosto, the poet, was so long and so deeply enamoured.'" This would be an anticlimax for a romantic, but Louise de Stolberg had never been romantic except by chance. She was a Voltairean—an eighteenth-century bluestocking, with plenty of wit and no great burden of sensibility. It is not an unattractive type; it wears well, whereas the true romantics—the Prince Charlies—ought to die young.

Miss Mitchiner has a first-rate subject, and has done justice to it; her book is scholarly, intelligent, and abundantly entertaining.

The other four biographers have chosen less happily. Catherine of Braganza was a pathetic little figure, but there is not much to say about her; and though Miss Mackay has done her best, and writes very pleasantly, a great part of the time we are merely re-reading a well-known chapter of English history. Major Paget's chapter, on the other hand, consists mainly of gaps and queries; nothing daunted, he has rewritten that in the now popular novel form, with twentieth-century dialogue. His heroine is Cecily Nevile, the mother of Edward IV; but, as we know almost nothing of her, the real subject has to be the Duke of York and his wars. It seems the Yorkists were altogether in the right; they were decent fellows, and indeed one can't help feeling that at some unmentioned stage of his career the Duke went to Sandhurst, while his wife was probably at Roedean. Sir Charles Oman guarantees the whole book as plausible, and it is certainly very unpretentious and simple-minded.

In *Eleanor of Aquitaine* the pedestal is once again too large for the statue. We do know that Henry II's queen was a remarkable woman, but not, except vaguely and approximately, what she was like; Mr. Rosenberg has therefore filled in, capably enough, with the social life of the period, the troubadours, and the Courts of Love. And finally, with Boadicea, we approach total darkness—not that Mr. Spence would agree; he imagines himself to have a very sufficient understanding of the Warrior Queen. His book is mainly a rather formidable essay on Ancient Britain, and a re-examination of every scrap of evidence bearing on the Iceni revolt. Nothing can make such a subject into light reading, but Mr. Spence has humanised it to the very limit of the possible by a devout jingoism, and an abuse of the Romans which would have satisfied his heroine at her most indignant. Concupiscence, he agrees with her, "is the salient characteristic of the Latin Italian"; and in her denunciation of Roman lust he is charmed to recognise "perhaps the first example of the British passion for propriety which has so frequently been misconstrued by our Continental neighbours. . . . It is indeed remarkable that the first British matron who appears in our history should have revealed in her spoken sentiments those self-same qualities which the great majority of British wives and mothers, even in these latter days, are known to possess."

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TWO BOOKS BY DOCTORS

Leaves from a Surgeon's Case-Book. By JAMES HARPOLE. *Cassell.* 8s. 6d.

From the Doctor's Note-Book. By SIR JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE. *Duckworth.* 7s. 6d.

We all know something about that virile nonagenarian, Sir James Crichton-Browne, even if that something amounts to little more than familiarity with his striking Victorian aspect. But as to the personality concealed behind the pseudonym James Harpole we have to depend for knowledge on the publishers' statement and such inferences as we may draw from his book. Messrs. Cassell tell us that the author is a "famous surgeon," and so he may well be. In any event he is up-to-date in his medical knowledge; and he can write simply, informatively, and readably, with no literary affectations and no journalistic clichés. "Mr. Harpole's" book is an excellent popular exposition of current medical knowledge concerning a number of the most-talked-about human diseases—tuberculosis, influenza, cancer, haemophilia, dyspepsia and malaria; whilst among the chapter headings are: "The wonder gland," "This vitamin business," "The fountain of youth," and "The curse of Eve." The last two of these captions head discussions of the problems of rejuvenescence and of childbirth. The publishers state that "this is not a medical book but a book of cases, and amazing cases they are." Yet the case-book instances are unconvincing, the "cases" adduced having the appearance of inventions planned to arrest and hold the reader's attention. Anyway it doesn't matter; the point is that this is a good, useful, and really informing book.

From the Doctor's Note-Book is an altogether different affair. Whether Mr. Harpole's "Case-book" has real or fictional existence, there is no doubt about the material existence of Sir James Crichton-Browne's Note-book. "These jottings," he says in his preface, "are necessarily desultory, incongruous and ephemeral." For many years, Sir James has been one of England's best known and most frequent after-dinner speakers; and it is a fair inference that not a few of these stories, ideas and comments were jotted down, and put into a drawer so that they might be available for brightening up the cigar stage of some of the thousands of public dinners which the author must have eaten in the course of his long life. His latest book is a queer medley of mild jokes and trivialities, sometimes on the verge of the banal, on the one hand, and interesting personal experiences and genuinely humorous bits of shrewd philosophy on the other. It is a first-rate bedside book. Here are two or three extracts taken from a single page:

> An English country gentleman applied to a firm of nurserymen in Scotland to find him a competent gardener who must be a teetotaller. The firm replied: "We hope to be able to meet your requirements, but we do not know of any gardener who is a teetotaller. We can however send you a clever gardener, whom you canna mak' fou'."
>
> Language is one of the most cohesive or insulating of world forces. Dialect is always a bond of union.
>
> What is called "Esprit de corps" is often a mild type of pugnacity.

Elsewhere we come across such bits as the following:

> Men and women of the higher grades of intelligence are begotten by fathers of mature years. In people of superior intelligence or eminence the proportion with paternal age more than forty-five years is twice the normal; more than sixty years ten times, and more than seventy years fifty times the normal.

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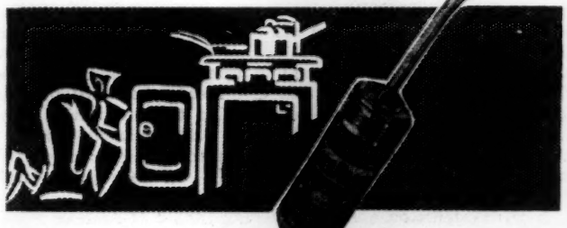

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New Statesman, 4/12/37

Pavlov, the great Russian physiologist, who died of pneumonia in his eighty-seventh year, said: "Old age has a lot of advantages. . . . My mind has become much freer than it was before. Of course I know that this is all due to my losing the faculty of self-criticism."

No interesting conversation can be long maintained without slander of one kind or another, personal or historical.

Not one of those benefactors of our species, the great chemists, physicists, inventors, engineers who have transmogrified the world has come out of any of our great public schools.

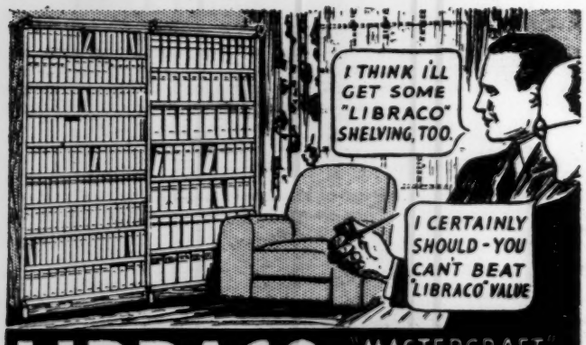
HARRY ROBERTS

FOUR WOMEN AND JOHN WESLEY

Son to Susanna: The Private Life of John Wesley. By G. ELSIE HARRISON. *Nicholson and Watson.* 8s. 6d.

Mrs. Harrison has undertaken an interesting piece of research, and carried it through in ruthless fashion. The women who counted in John Wesley's life have all been written about by his biographers, but this is the first time that the available mass of material has been worked over with the intention of ranging the four in order and placing them in due relation to the apostle's work. Wesley was head of the Holy Club at Oxford when he was attracted by Sally Kirkham in the Cotswolds. She surrendered to a more rapid suitor. Then John and Charles joined General Oglethorpe in Georgia, and John ruined his missionary venture in the colony by becoming entangled with the flighty young Sophia Hopkey and behaving atrociously to her. He had barely entered upon his amazing half-century of evangelism when he came to know Grace Murray, the wife of a Scottish skipper and, as every piece of evidence shows, a splendid young woman.

She was important in Wesley's life for ten years. He made her head of his Orphan House at Newcastle and was singularly dependent upon her. She served him devotedly and, what is most remarkable, was his intimate travelling companion through England and Ireland. Wesley was almost incapable of proposing marriage, but he plainly told her that she and she alone would be his wife, and Grace Murray, when driven to despair, begged him to marry her. Before this happened certain of the Methodist brethren were speaking of her as "Mr. Wesley's whore." The relationship was broken up by a shocking exploit in treachery on the part of his brother Charles, who is handled by the author without mercy. She is entirely justified by the record. Charles Wesley emerges as a despicable character in whom Mrs. Harrison cannot find a single redeeming trait. Grace Murray married John Bennet, a contumacious Methodist preacher, and lived until 1803—lovely alike in youth and age. Upon John Wesley fell the misery of marriage with the vulgar widow Mary Vazeille, which misery, says Mrs. Harrison quaintly, "saved God's revival"—for how could the Methodist Church have been built up into the largest of all the "variations of Protestantism" if its founder had not been saved from fulfilment in love and home? This question is more than implied by Mrs. Harrison, who enjoys the singular good fortune of being commended by leading London Methodist ministers on account of her "gripping" narrative. As the title indicates, John Wesley's very curious encounters with women are explained by referring everything to his incomparable mother, who bore annual children to the Rev. Samuel Wesley. The interpretation surely is nothing more than amateurish playing with the psychology of twenty years ago. A detached reader might be a good deal more inclined to argue that in the central concern of man's private life John Wesley was an outraged son of the silly and intolerant and concupiscent rector of Epworth.



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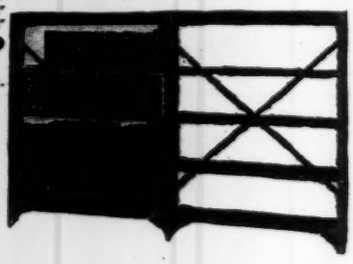

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Dusk of Europe. By WYTHE WILLIAMS. *Scribner's.* 12s. 6d.

By virtue of his position as foreign correspondent to various American newspapers, Mr. Williams has seen a good deal of the important international crises during the quarter century, 1910–35. His descriptions, especially those of the war years, are very interesting, though his journalistic sense of the dramatic and vivid often wrings you unduly. In contrast to the accounts of some statesmen and soldiers, they have a certain comfortable common sense. He concludes that in this period world-leadership has definitely passed from Europe to America. So it should, according to the rules of the game. Yet there are many signs, which Mr. Williams ignores, that the rules may not stay as they are. U.S.A. is Britain's legitimate successor. It may be claimed for her that she is the most efficient representative now of that system of beliefs, liberal-democracy and the primacy of the trader, which once gave Britain an ascendancy over a world consisting largely of quiescent populations. On that argument it only remains for her right to leadership to be confirmed in the second Armageddon which Mr. Williams foresees. But that is to leave a lot out of the picture. The next world-conflict (which perhaps has already broken out locally in Spain and China), may turn out to be an international civil war in which those beliefs which elevated Britain will disappear or be transformed into something beneficial to more peoples than the constitution of one nation can contain. Who actually holds world-leadership now? To judge by the newspapers, you would think that the economically second-rate powers of Germany and Italy not only lead the world but lead it by the nose. As a reasonable corrective to that propaganda, Mr. Williams, insistence on the power and importance of America is worth having. We should devote a thought now and then to the military potentialities of the United States—especially as nobody shouts about them.

Wanderings of a Bird-lover in Africa. By MADELINE ALSTON. *H. F. and G. Witherby.* 8s. 6d.

Mrs. Alston is one of those fortunate beings who are able to leave their homes for two or three months every year "to follow the call of the birds." She has followed it in the Cape Province, Natal, Rhodesia, and to a lesser extent in the Kalahiri and Nyasaland. The book is something of a compromise between birds and travel. It is not sufficiently practical and scientific for the ornithologist, while it is too heavily laden with observations on birds for the ordinary travel reader. Although the style is in no way laboured, one has a feeling that the book is consciously "written." "Freesias! Freesias! Just think of it! Freesias growing wild on the cliffs so that you are almost afraid to look up for fear of crushing their fragrant beauty by putting your clumsy foot on them." Those who like this sort of thing will find plenty here, for Mrs. Alston revels in it. She succeeds, however, in painting a good picture of bird life in the countries described, for she is observant, as well as lyrical. Mowbray Leigh's pencil drawings, which illustrate the book, are admirable; the birds seem almost alive. The flamboyant coloured frontispiece, by the same artist, is less pleasing.

Sporting Adventures. By J. WENTWORTH DAY. *Harrap.* 12s. 6d.
Spinning Up-to-date. By "JOCK SCOTT." *Seeley Service.* 12s. 6d.

It is a pity that Mr. Wentworth Day has adopted a rather forced grouping in this book, which consists almost wholly of newspaper articles. As a whole, these easily stand the test of book-form without being parcelled, sometimes very oddly, into the twelve months of the

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year. June, for instance, has only one article credited to it and that has nothing to do with June. However, the important thing is that Mr. Wentworth Day has a descriptive gift. The first article for May is a gem of its kind. The author makes one or two slips, such as describing a dunlin as being no larger than a florin and talking of a tawny owl's horn-like ears. But the spirit of the marshland creeps through the book, that land of wide skies and hard winters, a treasure-house of bird life. "Fish-Hawk's" line illustrations are in keeping with the book, though a ring plover and a godwit have their legs attached in curious places. The half-tone plates are not so successful, the birds being wooden and the tone values bad.

"Jock Scott's" book on spinning as a means of catching salmon, trout and pike is an expert treatise. Every mystery of the art is known to him but, unlike some masters, he is refreshingly free from dogmatism. Often he suggests that there are good alternatives to his own methods and recommends novices to try them. It has been said before that the author is an "exponent and not a partisan." That praise is still true. The book is well written and includes explanatory illustrations and photographs which have been selected with care.

Baghdad Sketches. By FREYA STARK. *Murray.* 12s. 6d.

The Valleys of the Assassins and *The Southern Gates of Arabia* have already taken their place as two of the finest travel books published during the last twenty-five years. Their subjects are fascinating. The style in which they are written is smooth, lucid, distinguished, without being ever in the least pedantic; while they contain descriptive passages that should certainly be included in any future anthology of modern English prose. *Baghdad Sketches*, a collection of essays and impressions, composed, most of them, some years back, is not a book of the same calibre and should not be criticised by the same standards. These essays belong to a period when Miss Stark had not yet quite mastered her present admirable prose manner; their content is often very slight; the effect they make is somewhat diffuse and chatty. Nevertheless, like everything Miss Stark writes, they are well worth reading; and they have a special interest since the Baghdad they describe is now rapidly passing away and very soon may be as hard to visualise as the city of the Caliphs. Particularly good is the authoress' account of her adventurous visit—heavily veiled—to the great Shi'a shrine at Kadhimain and her expedition to the ancient city of Samarra; for here she approaches the descriptive felicity of her later books. The volume contains some indifferent pen-and-ink drawings; but these are overshadowed by a large number of excellent photographs. Miss Stark takes photographs as well as she writes; and, at her best, that is saying a great deal.

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HAMISH HAMILTON

Eton Portrait. By BERNARD FERGUSSON. With a chapter on College, by PHILIP BROWNRIGG, and photographs by L. MOHOLY-NAGY. *John Miles.* 15s.

For those who are curious about Eton—and presumably there are such people, or the publishers would make no profit—this book may be taken as a complement to the one by Messrs. Byrne and Churchill that came out earlier in the year. That was written by two masters and dealt with education. This is by a boy and does not mention education, except in the chapter on College, which is by another boy. What it does describe very nicely is the atmosphere of civilised good humour which distinguishes the training of the English boy as a whole and in which Eton is pre-eminent. The Nazi youth leaders, for instance, would be driven to a frenzy of irritation by Mr. Fergusson's account of the O.T.C., particularly if they could be brought to realise that it is the account of neither a Jew nor a highbrow, but of just that sort of chap who so casually rules where the sun never sets. The photographs are singularly ingenious, and their characterisation is so exact and so unselfconscious that one feels M. Moholy-Nagy must have been disembodied when he took most of them. The fault of the book is its facetiousness. Mr. Fergusson may not be at all facetious in person, but he must learn, if he wants to make best use of a pleasant natural talent, that an Etonian need not necessarily be limited to the style of a Fourth of June ephemeral in after-life, despite professional example; for though it is good to be a professional writer, it is not always good to combine this with being a professional Etonian.

The Lilliput Annual. Edited by STEFAN LORANT. Pocket Publications. 4s. 6d.

Mr. Stefan Lorant claims to have been the originator of the "pocket magazine," which began with huge sales in Germany and was then successfully copied in America. Leaving Germany Mr. Lorant came to London and has popularised the "pocket magazine" here. The principal features of *Lilliput* are already well known: articles (mostly comic) and stories by well-known writers, cartoons, verses, ingeniously juxtaposed photographs (the hippo's yawn next to an after-dinner speaker), coloured reproductions of masterpieces, some nudes, jokes from Manhattan rather than Bouverie Street. This amusing hotch-potch is packed into a pamphlet one can slip in the pocket. After a year of *Lilliput*, the twelve numbers have been collected into a volume of something over 700 pages. It is bright, varied, amazingly cheap, and just the thing for magpie reading.

99 Wimpole Street. By J. JOHNSTON ABRAHAM. *Chapman and Hall.* 5s.

This is a little book of essays, the majority dealing with medicine and allied subjects. There is nothing new in the material, but Mr. Abraham can make good bricks with little straw, for he is both observant and sympathetic. He also has an analytical mind. A pleasant undercurrent of optimism runs through the essays, particularly noticeable in the final chapter "The Fear of Death." Occasionally the author is too dogmatic. How can he be certain that the lower animals are unaware of the inevitability of death? And how is he informed that our ancestors of the Stone Age were equally ignorant? It is also surprising to note an instance of loose topography on page 189, where it is suggested to the reader that the Suez Canal is within the tropics. One does not expect such slips from the author of the *Surgeon's Log*. These points, however, scarcely detract from the merit of the book, which is good reading for the bedside table.

"Curtis": The Life of Sir Henry Curtis-Bennett, K.C. By ROLAND WILD and DEREK CURTIS-BENNETT. *Cassell.* 15s.

This is a pleasantly readable book which deserves a wider public than the legal fraternity or those only interested in sensational cases. Curtis-Bennett was one of the finest products of the modern Bar. Well versed in the law, and more than competent as an advocate, he never allowed his profession to dominate his life to the exclusion of outside interests. An enthusiastic bicyclist in his early days and later an equally enthusiastic driver of an open Rolls, a connoisseur of food and drink and a discriminating traveller, he enjoyed life with a zest that would have surprised and possibly shocked a Victorian "Silk." Some of his famous cases were the Farrow Bank case, the Armstrong murder, the Bywaters-Thompson murder, the Fahmy shooting case, and various Hyde Park cases. During the past few years there has been considerable professional dissatisfaction with some of the appointments of those who have to preside over the criminal courts in London. Curtis-Bennett's appointment to the Chairmanship of London Sessions, which he never lived to enjoy, was widely welcomed. In this book the authors, with admirable judgment, have allowed Curtis-Bennett's attractive personality to speak for itself.

The Radical Tory. Disraeli's Political Development Illustrated from His Original Writings and Speeches. Selected, edited and introduced by H. W. J. EDWARDS. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

Whether Disraeli was or was not a consistent politician scarcely seems a matter of importance in 1937. That magic name, by means of which Mr. Baldwin used to play on the loyalty of his youngest and brightest supporters, is seldom invoked in the days of this strictly practical Brummagem Government. Mr. H. W. J. Edwards, assisted by a nimble preface from Mr. G. M. Young, has sought to build a

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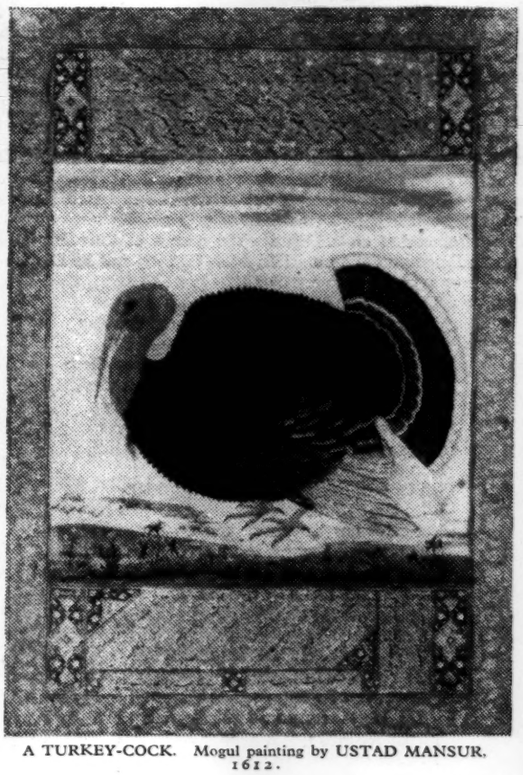

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bridge between the Radical Disraeli of the early 1830's and the Tory Disraeli of the 1840's. He has no doubt succeeded. Disraeli hated the Whigs in his early period, and he hated them with equal ferocity in his later years. The reader wonders, however, whether the hatred was ever anything more than the dislike of the "have-nots" for the "haves." Hatred of the Whigs never prevented Disraeli from being an original member of the Reform Club—a purely Whig concern. Mr. Edwards has managed to collect some ferocious specimens of Disraeli's style, and the reader can certainly learn something of the violence of political controversy a century ago.

Week-end Competitions

No. 403

Set by Geoffrey Parsons

We offer the usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea for the best review by Colonel Blimp of *This England*—the collection in pamphlet form, illustrated by Low, which has just been published by *N.S. & N.*—in not more than 250 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, December 10th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 401

Set by W. R. Hughes

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for a sonnet *To Autumn*, written without an adjective.

Report by W. R. Hughes

I expected, and had, some little trouble about those adjectives. My purpose was to exclude the descriptive adjective (including participles), as some little help towards achieving austerity, on so hackneyed a theme. About the small fry of the adjectival world (the little creatures I was taught to call articles, possessive pronouns, and the like) I did not propose to be strict, though some competitors have most religiously excluded these also.

I had a certain reward in reading the ninety sonnets submitted, for there was not a "russet," a "mellow" or a "mournful" among them all. But I see now that I should also have excluded the mention of leaves (coloured, falling, dead) and of mists; then perhaps I should have got more than the few among all these entries that showed signs of fresh thought or of the work needed to fashion a good sonnet.

The first prize goes to Charles Abbatt, for a fine, closely wrought piece of work, into which the scavenger beetle makes an effective entry.

For second prize I had selected G. R.'s vigorous and original sonnet, both verbally and metrically interesting. But I noticed that the writer, in using a familiar collocation, had allowed an undoubted adjective to slip in, and must therefore, to my regret, be disqualified. But the sonnet certainly deserves to be printed, and G. R. must be satisfied with the rank without the guinea-stamp. Here it is:

Blacken, dahlia! Wind, race whooping, shod
In ice up leg! Sky-sponge, freeze, drip, leak!
Dip, sea-gull, over plough-land! Peewit, seek
Haven in Heaven! Poacher, homeward plod!
On foot clay cling, on hazel catkin nod!
Ooze fog, seep slimily through vale, climb peak!
Fall upward, tears, moisten England's cheek!
Confuse Pathetic Fallacy with God.

Shroud softly lawn in leaves, skim skin of ice
From mud; burn elm, burn apple, ash and oak;
Drip drop from nostril, cuddle feet in bed;
Complacently remark: "Note light's demise
Daily more early." Thus happily Time's yoke
Couples to clime its cliché. Enough said.

G. R.

I was now left in difficulty about the second prize, for nothing else stood out so clearly. J. S. M. came very near to it, but he also grew careless in the last line of a sonnet which ended:

Put away Herrick, open Baudelaire,
Everyone says that it will freeze to-night.
My God, I wish I was a polar (adj.) bear.

Finally, though with hesitation, I chose Nyamok's effort. This type of thing may be easier to write than more serious verse, but it certainly runs well all through, although one misses the expected break after the octet.

The commended class includes the names of Guy Innes, B. J. R. Moreton, Lakshmi, William Bliss, Miss G. Pitt, and R. D. C.

FIRST PRIZE

Who only sees in childhood's form the clay
Destined to fashion Nature's parodies
Of God in Man, and swell or shrink as these
Things of compassion have since yesterday,
May find the forms and odours of decay
Burn sweetly in the nostrils and the eyes
(Organs that shall, before the Master dies,
Run on ahead to indicate the way).
Liken him to that beetle, Necrophore,
Who cries condolence to the sparrow's mate,
Yet cares not, asks not, how it went before
The widow knew his claim to the estate.
Canst thou not teach them, Autumn, one thing more—?
He also falls who only lies in wait.

CHARLES ABBATT

SECOND PRIZE

I read a piece in Saturday's *Gazette*
Wot said, Autumn's the pick of all the year.
I arsk yer, Autumn! if I 'ad 'im 'ere,
That poet bloke, 'e'd change 'is tune, I bet!
'E'd see me wheelin' barrers in the wet,
Rakin' up leaves, as fast as I could clear,
And never time to fetch a drop o' beer,
With missus bawlin', "Ain't you finished *yet?*
And all them bulbs and wallflowers still to plant,
And where you mean to put 'em, goodness knows!
With not a border or a flower-bed dug."—
A Termagant, I calls 'er: *Termagant!*
Autumn! would any man o' sense suppose
Even a poet could be *such* a Mug?

NYAMOK

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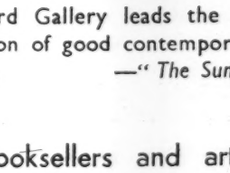

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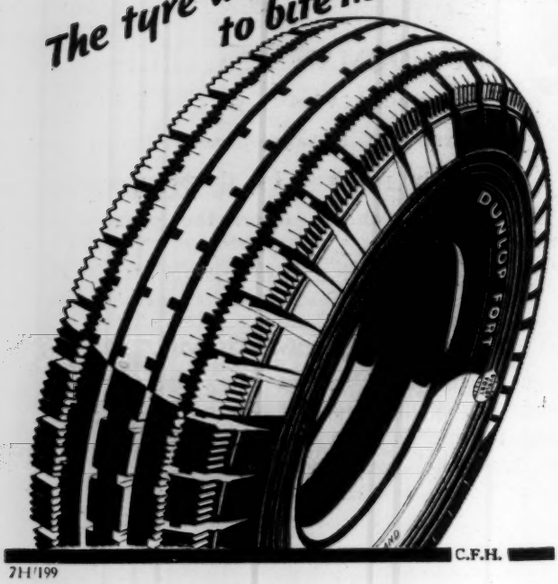

C.F.H.

71H/199

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CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 257.—FUN AT THE CHURCH BAZAAR

There were four stalls at our church bazaar. At the sweet stall, each article cost 2*s.*; at the toy stall, 3*s.*; at the needlework stall, 4*s.*; at the china stall, 5*s.*

At the conclusion of the affair four sisters—Laura, Flora, Cora and Dora—were overheard comparing notes.

"I gave each of my kids the same amount to spend," said Laura.

"So did I," said Flora.

"And I," said Cora.

"Me too," added Dora.

It transpired, however, that each of the sisters had provided a different amount. This was interesting; still more interesting was it that each child had laid out his or her money differently. Moreover, each of the sisters has the same number of children; each child bought ten articles at the bazaar; and each child patronised all four stalls. And finally, every method of laying out the money provided—consistent with what has been explained—was utilised.

"The toy stall wasn't as popular as I'd expected," said Flora. "Two of my kids bought only one thing each there."

"Same here," said Laura.

"Three of mine bought only one toy each," said Cora.

How many toys were bought by Dora's brood?

PROBLEM 255.—QUADROONS

By R. J. Whitaker

The composer's solution is:

$$J3 = 1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{1} + \frac{1}{2} + \ldots \text{ ad inf.}$$

The successive convergents are:

$$\frac{1}{1}, \frac{2}{1}, \frac{5}{3}, \frac{7}{4}, \frac{19}{11}, \frac{26}{15}, \frac{71}{41}, \frac{97}{56} \ldots$$

and alternate convergents (in even places) have numerators and denominators which solve the equation $p^2 - 3q^2 = 1$.

So the shares are 97^2, 3×56^2, 26^2, 3×15^2 and the gardener's share is 832 quadroons.

[N.B.—If a triangle has its sides consecutive numbers, and its area an integer, then if the three sides are $x - 1$, x, $x + 1$, the possible values of x are twice the numerators of the convergents in the even places above, e.g., 3, 4, 5; 13, 14, 15; 51, 52, 53; 193, 194, 195; and so on].

Solution by Dr. G. Placzek (Copenhagen)

The late King of Algebrasia seems to have been a botanist rather than a gourmet, to judge from the ratio of his legacies to gardener and cook.

Let the shares of one son, one maid and the gardener be x_1^2, x_2^2 and g. x_1 and x_2 are solutions of the equation

$$y^2 - 3x^2 = 1 \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (1)$$

where x and y are positive integers. For the gardener's share we have:

$$g = 20.998 - 6(x_1^2 + x_2^2) \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (2)$$

From (2) follows

$$x_1^2 + x_2^2 < 3499 \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (3)$$

or

$$x < 60 \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (4)$$

The largest solution of (1), compatible with (4), is:

$$x_1 = 56.$$

Inserting this into (3), we get

$$x_2 < 20 \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (5)$$

and analogously, from (1)

$$x_2 = 15.$$

With these values for x_1 and x_2 we find now from (2):

$$g = 832 \text{ quadroons.}$$

PROBLEM 254.—WAITING FOR THE GHOST

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: E. B. Coursey, The Grammar School, Galway.

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Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

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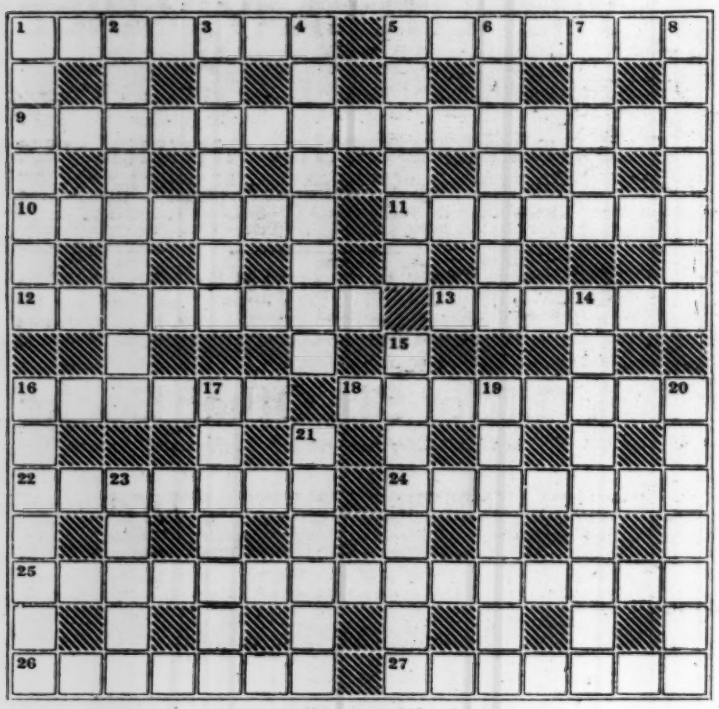


Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Lord Denman.

ACROSS

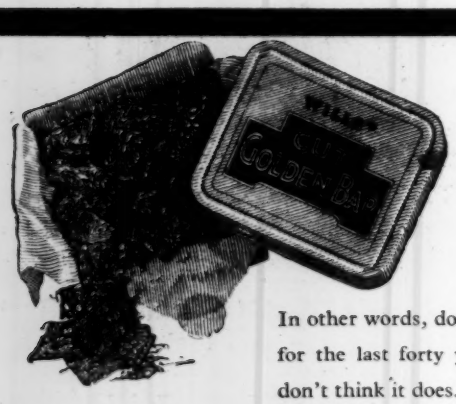
1. Food children hurl at cowards. (7)
5. A splendid morning, Grandmother. (7)
9. Very small cutters. (15)
10. Seacow's anagram. (7)
11. Goes under foot at the opening. (7)
12. Sends round a douceur. (8)
13. Presumably not used for walking out. (6)
16. Queen Elizabeth married him. (6)
18. Criminal way to put people out of breath. (8)
22. How correspondents wrap up? (7)
24. Precursor of the epaulette. (7)
25. 25 miles would be hardly more than a step in it. (15)
26. Bad lies put one out of action (7)
27. Take the same steps again, in a tiring way perhaps. (7)

DOWN

1. An M.P. enters Welsh castles. (7)
2. Smallest republic in the world (9)
3. Meat in a living form. (7)
4. The pet is in the van it seems. (8)
5. Italian who appears to magnify himself. (6)
6. Forest of a fallen tree. (7)
7. The stuff can be blown up. (5)
8. A false move it seems when a spinster puts her foot down. (7)
14. Balancers must hope never to be at a loose end on it. (9)
15. The Naval Reserve gets entangled with the stage. (8)
16. The King relieved by getting oiled. (7)
17. Provides a valuable point no doubt for a writer. (7)
19. Common cause of ill feeling. (7)
20. Condition of the man who was voted the crossest so to speak. (7)
21. A portion each. (6)
23. Six to five as they shout. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

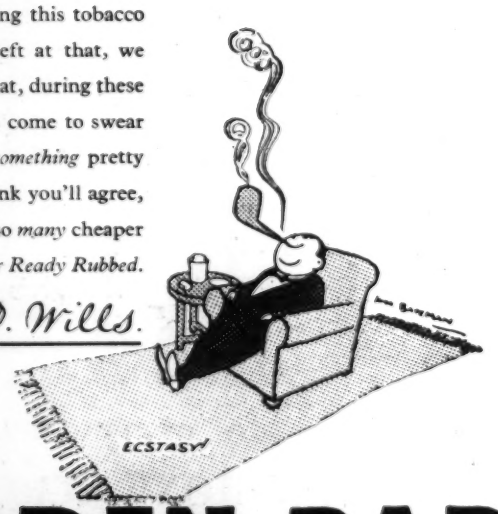
H	O	R	N	B	O	O	K	■	H	A	M	M	E	R
E	■	E	■	U	■	L	■	■	■	L	■	E	■	E
C	A	M	P	B	E	D	S	■	C	L	E	A	N	S
A	■	A	■	B	■	S	■	■	■	N	■	L	■	T
T	R	I	L	L	I	O	N	■	P	I	S	T	O	L
E	■	N	■	E	■	L	■	W	■	G	■	I	■	E
■	■	■	■	■	I	D	E	A	L	H	O	M	E	S
S	■	T	■	S	■	I	■	L	■	T	■	E	■	S
C	A	R	T	W	H	E	E	L	S	■	■	■	■	■
R	■	I	■	E	■	R	■	S	■	S	■	P	■	S
A	P	P	L	E	S	■	S	T	A	M	P	O	U	T
G	■	L	■	T	■	■	■	R	■	E	■	M	■	A
E	X	E	M	P	T	■	W	E	L	L	B	O	R	N
N	■	T	■	E	■	■	■	E	■	L	■	N	■	C
D	I	S	M	A	Y	■	S	T	A	Y	L	A	C	E



Does "Old Established" cut any ice?

In other words, does the fact that we have been making this tobacco for the last forty years prove anything? Frankly, left at that, we don't think it does. But when we also state the fact that, during these forty years, a steadily increasing army of smokers has come to swear by WILLS'S Cut Golden Bar, it surely proves there's *something* pretty remarkable about it. Its price of 1/- an ounce, we think you'll agree, is scarcely enough to explain its popularity—there are so *many* cheaper brands nowadays. *You can get it in the Original form or Ready Rubbed.*

W. D. & H. O. Wills.



WILLS'S CUT GOLDEN BAR

Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd. CB92B

THE SAFE, SENSIBLE WAY to treat colds

VAPEX

TRADE MARK
INHALANT

Why suffer the discomfort of a cold for a minute longer than necessary? Vapex clears the head—relieves stuffiness and eases the breathing. By inhaling Vapex from your handkerchief, you reach every congested part of the nose and throat, destroying the germs and thus removing the infection.
Deep inhaling with Vapex is the logical way to attack a cold—a method that is safe and sure, and which does not contain harmful drugs.

Cold germs are everywhere

You can catch a cold wherever people gather. In train and bus, in theatre or cinema, millions of germs are breathed into—*and from*—the air. Then, if you are run down, worried or undernourished, you will catch colds.
Use Vapex as a preventative—a drop on your handkerchief for day-long protection.

Off to School with Vapex

Classrooms are notorious for spreading colds. A little Vapex on the handkerchief . . . with instructions to breathe from it occasionally . . . will keep your children free from colds.

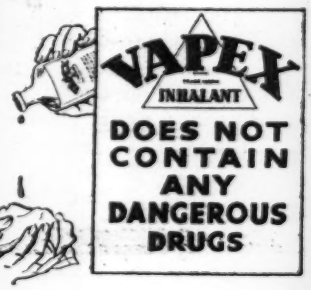
READ THIS TESTIMONIAL FROM THE MATRON OF A NURSING HOME.

"I used to suffer dreadfully from colds, but have not had one for four years, entirely due to using Vapex. I advise all my patients and friends to use it."
—B. S.,
Burnham-on-Sea.

V174

VAPEX KILLS GERMS

You can feel Vapex doing you good — feel your discomfort slipping away from you. For 21 years Vapex has been clearing colds. All over the world many thousands of people use Vapex at the first sign of a cold. Many thousands more use it regularly to prevent colds.



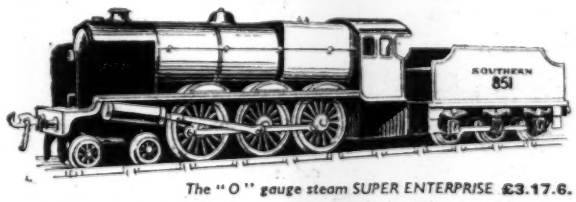
A DROP ON YOUR HANDKERCHIEF BY DAY AND ON YOUR PILLOW AT NIGHT

It is a sensible precaution to have Vapex handy in the house. Put a bottle in reserve—to-day—and be ready for prompt action. In its earliest stages a cold is easiest to dispel.

Of all Chemists 2/- & 3/-

THOMAS KERFOOT & CO., LTD.

The PRESENT that EVERY BOY hopes he will get!



The "O" gauge steam SUPER ENTERPRISE **£3.17.6.**

● Your boy would love an "00" gauge scale Miniature Railway for example, driven by electricity, operated in one quarter the usual space, etc. Express Train complete, **37/-**, Goods **32/-**. Rails extra. Trains, motor boats, yachts . . . which has he set his heart on?

Write for catalogues to-day.

A.120. Complete Model Railway Book. **6d.** **S.120.** Model Ship Catalogue. **6d.** **F.B.120.** Free Booklet of "O" gauge trains "Railway Thrills." **T.T.120.** Booklet of the "00" gauge Twin Train Table Railway.

BASSETT-LOWKE LTD., NORTHAMPTON

LONDON: 112, High Holborn, W.C.1. **MANCHESTER: 28, Corporation Street.**

The Mystery of Africa

In the heart of the Rhodesian veld lie the Zimbabwe ruins, vast and inscrutable, the mystery of whose origin has baffled the explorers of the last century and the scientists of this. Zimbabwe, the inspiration of "King Solomon's Mines", a part of the old Africa—the dark continent—no one knows what race defended this granite fortress or worshipped in this stately temple—whence came the builders, whither they went.

Until a few years ago, no white man had set eyes on these mysterious ruins. To-day, Zimbabwe, just as awe-inspiring, just as beautiful, attracts travellers from all over the world. They journey there in comfort, by rail or road, stay at good hotels or camp on the rolling veld as their inclination lies. From thence they can go easily to the wonderful mountain scenery of the Eastern districts or north west to the greatest natural wonder of the world—The Victoria Falls.

Do you realise that this country which, forty years ago, took months to reach, is now within 5 days of London by air—two days from Capetown by train, after a restful fortnight at sea—or 12 hours from Beira, an East Coast port reached via the sunny Mediterranean?

"Travel in Southern Rhodesia" is a booklet describing in detail an actual holiday tour—write now for a complimentary copy to The High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia, Room 21, Rhodesia House, 429 Strand, London, W.C.2.

Corfe Castle, Dorset.

"There's no sweeter Tobacco comes from Virginia and no better brand than the 'Three Castles.'"
W. M. Thackeray—"THE VIRGINIANS."

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CIGARETTES

10 FOR 8D
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50 FOR 3/3

Handmade
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Also obtainable in other packings

One expects to pay a little more for a cigarette of such excellent Quality

T.T.183D

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

BRIGHTER MARKETS—U.S. HOUSING SCHEMES—EQUITY SWITCHES

The technical position of markets has undoubtedly strengthened. I referred last week to the improvement in British industrial shares which followed upon the concerted buying of a few important Insurance and Trust Companies. I hear this week that three new Investment Trusts are to be formed under excellent auspices to put about £3,000,000 (combined) into the market at the present level of prices. They might possibly do quite well, but everything depends upon America. For the moment Wall Street is showing a better tone. One firm of Wall Street brokers sums up professional feeling in the words: "Bad as markets are, they are not as bad as sentiment." Actually sentiment has somewhat improved; bearishness is rather played out. Mr. Roosevelt is still moving slowly, but his direction is still to the Right. On the four vital questions—revision of taxes, railroads, utilities and housing—some further progress has been made. The revision of taxes will not be carried through in this special session, but is tentatively promised for the regular session of Congress. Moreover, the chairman of the Senate Tax Committee declared in a radio speech that the passing into law of the undistributed profits tax was a mistake, and that the tax must be repealed or drastically revised. On the railroad problem Wall Street was pleased to hear from the White House that the administration would favour a further rate increase and that the labour unions are now supporting the managements in their rates application. The chairman of the Railroad Managements Association has stated that the companies would spend $1,000 millions a year on re-equipment for three years if they secured their rate increase—a bait which the Government will find it hard not to swallow. In the utility field peace has not been declared, but at any rate something like an armistice is being observed. There remains housing, the most important field for a revival in the capital goods industries.

* * *

The special Presidential Message to Congress on the subject of housing was considered at first glance by Wall Street to be unconstructive, but it represents at least a positive attempt to galvanise one form of capital investment, and may ultimately be of considerable importance. Unlike the Act passed last summer, which created a "revolving" fund of $500 millions to assist municipal housing schemes, the accent this time is laid on the need to encourage private enterprise in house construction. To this end two separate proposals are made. First, to stimulate large-scale apartment house construction, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is to lend $50,000,000 to the chartered National Mortgage Associations, who will be authorised, on the basis of this Federal credit, to market $1,000 millions worth of debentures. Their proceeds, in turn, are to be lent to apartment house entrepreneurs to finance new building. Secondly, individuals who are prepared to place a contract for the erection of a private dwelling are to be able in future to insure mortgage loans at cheap rates up to 90 per cent. (instead of 80 per cent., as heretofore) of the appraised value of properties not costing over $6,000, thus reducing appreciably the amount of the cash deposit required. It may be objected that the easier financial facilities thus provided may not be immediately effective in deciding people to launch out into construction at a time when the general business outlook is depressing, the future of most incomes obscure, and building costs disproportionately high. On the other hand, the President announced his intention to initiate a series of conferences between capital and labour on the question of costs, and hinted at the possibility of building labour accepting lower hourly rates in return for a guaranteed annual minimum. On the whole, I think Wall Street took an unduly pessimistic view of the Housing Message. It may take time in this direction, as in that of capital investment by the utilities and railroads, to get things moving. But, as the President emphasised, housing arrears in the U.S.A. are immense.

* * *

From the point of view of this country, the most serious side of the American slump is its reaction on commodity prices and hence on the purchasing power of many of our overseas customers. British export figures for October were still good, but a further fall of 10–15 per cent. in the price of primary products would be quickly reflected in diminished orders from the Dominions, India and South America. It would take much more than an Anglo-U.S.A. trade agreement to fill the gap. Internally it is difficult to detect, as yet, any really disturbing signs of a set-back in British industrial activity. Turnover in the London department stores is disappointing, particularly in luxury lines, whose consumption is rapidly affected by stock market losses. The motor trade—a good index always of marginal demand—is less optimistic than it was before the Show, and the fall in raw material prices is proving a disturbing element in Lancashire and Yorkshire textiles. On the other hand, the October return of building plans approved was better than had been expected, and in heavy industry, engineering and every trade affected by rearmament, current order-books guarantee sustained activity for many months ahead. Apart from the textile trades, the weakest link in the chain is perhaps shipbuilding. The recent fall in freights has led to a slight increase in unemployed tonnage and contracts for new merchant ships are not being placed. A review of the country's situation as a whole leads to the conclusion that it is prospects, rather than actualities, which have deteriorated during the past three months.

* * *

While most investors are still lacking the courage (perhaps rightly) to buy British industrial shares for capital appreciation, wherever possible changes should be made from low yielding to higher yielding shares as long as there is not too great a sacrifice of quality. After the sharp fall which markets have suffered, there is bound to be a lot of unevenness in prices—that is to say, some shares have fallen too much and others too little. For example, I would exchange from Imperial Tobacco of Canada $5 shares at 52*s.* to yield £4 8*s.* 6*d.* per cent. on dividends of 11½ per cent. into British American Tobacco £1 units of ordinary stock at 5 7/32 to yield £5 1*s.* per cent. gross on dividends of 20 per cent. net. Again, I would advocate an exchange from J. and P. Coates £1 ordinary stock units at 41*s.* 9*d.* to yield £4 16*s.* per cent. on dividends of 10 per cent. into Amalgamated Metal Corporation ordinary shares at 25*s.* 3*d.* to yield £5 10*s.* per cent. on dividends of 7 per cent. Again, one might switch from British Oxygen ordinary units at 4¼ to yield £3 10*s.* 6*d.* per cent. on dividends 15 per cent. into Staveley Coal and Iron Co. ordinary stock units at 56*s.* 10½*d.* to yield £5 16*s.* per cent. gross on the basis of 12½ per cent. net dividends. There are many other instances which might be given. This is surely the time for every investor to review his list and to make exchanges which improve his income yield and, at the same time, his recovery position.

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The most striking testimony to the banking service of the C.W.S. Bank is the rapid growth in the number of its customers, and the amount of its funds. Current and Deposit Accounts opened for Clubs, Trade Unions, all Organisations of a Mutual Character, and Individuals. Write to-day to:—

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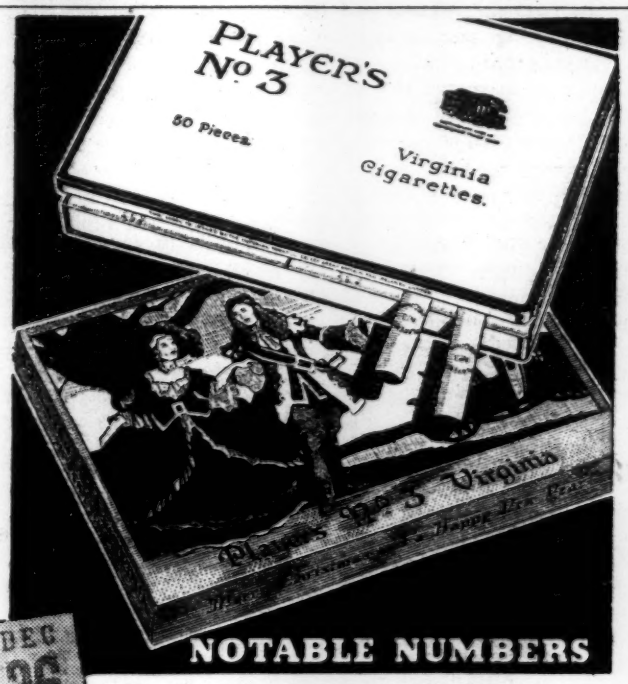


NOTABLE NUMBERS

DEC 26 DEC 25 DEC 24

Christmas is "in the air": these important numbers will soon appear on your calendar. So remember another number which will help with your presents or parties . . . Player's "No. 3 Virginia" Cigarettes. "Something a little better" for Christmas and packed in charming Christmassy cartons ready to post.

PLAYER'S NUMBER 3

EXTRA QUALITY VIRGINIA

60 for 3/6

3.P.44F

A red-letter day

December 25th, 1937, will be a red-letter day for many, because some inspired relative or friend has chosen as a gift the

Imperial 'Good Companion'

The dependable portable typewriter

PRICE

10 Guineas

Send the coupon below for interesting literature.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

NS

USE A TYPEWRITER MADE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

ALL IS CHANGED

In this home there was little hope of any Christmas celebration, beyond last year's tinsel and a few sweets for the children.

But now, all is changed. They are on the Church Army Parcel List, which means that Christmas for them will indeed be Christmas.

The Church Army hopes that thousands of other needy homes will have Christmas Parcels . . . but only your help can fulfil this hope.

£5 would mean ten Parcels. Ten Parcels would mean a Happy Christmas for ten poor families. Please send a gift to Preb. CARLILE, C.H., D.D., 55 Bryanston Road, London, W.1.

CHURCH ARMY

CHRISTMAS

A really warm fire and perhaps some little unexpected gift would bring such joy to 360 destitute, mostly aged and infirm ladies and gentlemen now being cared for by the

Distressed Gentlefolks' Aid Association.

This Christmas please remember those who have found sadness and poverty in their old age.

Secretary : Mrs. H. R. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT, C.B.E., J.P., 74 Brook Green, W.6.

YOU

can help to secure safety at sea—

For 112 years British Life-boatmen have been saving human life daily. This magnificent work costs one million 5/- each year to maintain its traditional standard of service to humanity on the seas. Help to secure this safety at sea by sending a gift today.

ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION

LIFE-BOAT HOUSE, 42, Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1

The EARL OF HARROWBY, Hon. Treasurer.
Lt.-Col. C. R. SATTERTHWAITE, O.B.E., Secretary

"For it is a false notion that more is gained by receiving than giving—no, the receiver and the giver are equal in their benefits."

JOHN KEATS.

MACBETH found that an uneasy conscience can ruin a good dinner. We do not suggest that an easily spared contribution towards the unfortunates who would otherwise go without is a pleasant way of excusing one's own self-indulgence ; nevertheless, it seems the special duty of all of us, particularly at this season, to do what we can to remove, at least temporarily, the hardships of others. It has been said that this paper is read by the "haves" with a real sympathy with the "have-nots." We appeal to our readers to demonstrate this sympathy by considering the deserving causes whose claims are set out in our pages in this issue and the two issues that follow.

THE CHURCH ARMY

We all have our opinions about slum clearance and rehousing, and many readers of this paper are taking an active part in the work of bettering the conditions of the poor ; but slums still exist and the need for societies such as the Church Army is still very great. Each Christmas the Church Army makes a special distribution of parcels of food and supplies of coal to thousands of families throughout the country. The distribution is most carefully and economically organised, the cost being about Ten Shillings per family. An official of this organisation told us that if only he could take some of the readers of this paper into the homes where these parcels will be going, there would be no difficulty in providing the funds. In the absence of this opportunity, we feel sure we can rely on the personal knowledge and imagination of our readers. Gifts should be addressed to the Preb. Carlile C.H., D.D., at 55 Bryanston Street, London, W.1.

THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION

REORGANISATION OF THE LIFE-BOAT FLEET

1936 was for the Royal National Life-boat Institution the busiest year in its whole history. 491 lives were rescued from shipwreck. This year already 480 lives have been saved.

The Institution is pushing ahead as rapidly as it can with the work of mechanising its fleet. Eleven motor life-boats have been completed this year and 17 more are under construction, all of which will be ready to go to the coast during the first half of 1938, and in 1938 another 19 are to be laid down. Many of these new motor life-boats are replacing similar life-boats which are now nearing the end of their service, but others will replace pulling and sailing life-boats, of which there are still 29 on our coasts. Within the next three years the Institution hopes that the last of the pulling and sailing life-boats will have been replaced by the far safer motor life-boats.

The general rise in prices is having its effect on life-boat work and during the past year the cost of each type of motor life-boat has increased by about £500. According to type these boats now cost from £3,000 to £10,000 each to build.

Contributions are badly needed and should be sent to the Secretary of the Institution, 42 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1.

Help Mummie to get well again

The Hospital serves a million poor in North London and there are very many mothers among the patients whose families anxiously await their return.

PLEASE HELP US THIS CHRISTMASTIDE FOR THEIR SAKE!

Everywhere in this district there is poverty, hardship and suffering, but very little money.

Send a gift now to the Rt. Hon. SIR PHILIP SASSOON, Bart., M.P., Hon. Treasurer.

ROYAL NORTHERN HOSPITAL

HOLLOWAY, N.7

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

Advice Better than Prosecution

This year the Society published its fifty-third annual report and the number of cases dealt with—46,003, involving the welfare of 114,466 children—is the highest ever recorded. This does not necessarily mean that there is more neglect of children or cruelty to them in the country to-day, but it has been proved, over and over again, that the forming of a new Branch, or the increasing of the number of Inspectors in an existing one, leads to the reporting of a considerable number of new cases.

It is not generally known that only 1 per cent. of the cases end in prosecution, by far the greatest number being corrected by advice and supervision. Under the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933 the powers of the Society have been vastly increased and the meaning of "cruelty" extended. As "fit and proper persons" the Society's representatives have the power to bring children before Juvenile Courts and make arrangements for them to be admitted to approved homes.

The Society's Inspectors have an excellent reputation among the representatives of such public bodies as Welfare Centres, Educational Authorities, Medical Officers of Health, and others, and the co-operation of our Inspectors is often requested in cases of "refusal of medical treatment" by parents. In almost every case the Society has succeeded in bringing home to the parents the meaning of the word "responsibility."

Will you contribute something this Christmas to enable the Society to appoint more Inspectors in the new year?

Donations should be addressed to The Director, N.S.P.C.C., Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

THE COLONIAL AND CONTINENTAL CHURCH SOCIETY

This famous Society, which was started 114 years ago, provides religious facilities for out-of-the-way areas of our Empire and for British communities in foreign countries. It is particularly concerned at this present time with Western Canada, where disaster, mainly through lack of rain and the resulting bad harvests, has affected no less than 60,000 families. The Dominion Government is affording physical relief, but faced with such conditions, it is vitally necessary to inspire patience and hope among the people. The missionary clergy are working against great odds, themselves sharing the hardships which surround them. Relief for them comes from Eastern Canada and friends in England. The needs are urgent and almost without limit, for everything sent to them in the way of money or provisions helps forward the cause for which they are giving their lives.

The children, too, in these districts are given the opportunity of religious experience by the Society. An organisation of Travelling Sunday School Vans and a system of instruction by post bring them up in the Christian faith and prepare their minds for the heartening work of the Society later on in life.

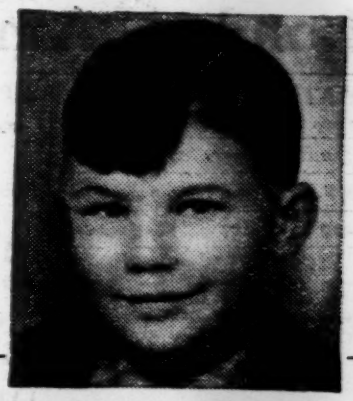
In Australia and East and West Africa as well as Canada the Society provides means for worship in our own tongue, but as things are at present it is impossible for many communities to be self-supporting. Gifts will be welcomed by The Secretary, The Colonial and Continental Church Society, 9 Serjeant's Inn, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND

Patron—HIS MAJESTY THE KING.
President—THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT HALIFAX, K.G., P.C.
Chairman of the Executive Committee—
SIR HUMPHRY ROLLESTON, Bt., G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Honorary Treasurer—SIR HOLBURT WARING, Bt., C.B.E., F.R.C.S.

Founded in 1902, under the direction of the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England as a centre for Research and information on cancer, the Imperial Cancer Research Fund is working unceasingly on the systematic investigation of the disease in man and animals. The work of this Fund and of other great centres of research has increased our knowledge of the origin and nature of cancer and has so altered our outlook that the disease is now curable in increasing numbers. But our present accommodation is too limited and we **are now building new modern laboratories** to extend the scope of our investigations. The income from investments and the Endowment Fund is insufficient to cover the total annual expenditure, and help is urgently needed to meet the heavy additional cost of expansion.

Legacies, Subscriptions, and Donations are earnestly solicited, and should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, 8-11 Queen Square, London, W.C.1.



HAPPIER CHILDREN

Children saved from ill-treatment last year by the N.S.P.C.C. numbered 114,336, making a total of almost 5,000,000 during 53 years' work. This *National* Society has 270 "Children's Men" working in England, Wales and Ireland. By persuasion, rather than prosecution, they are exerting a vast influence in overcoming conditions threatening the physical, moral and mental welfare of the young.

The N.S.P.C.C. has been responsible for valuable contributions to legislation, including the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Acts of 1889, 1894, 1904, and the Children and Young Persons' Act, 1933.

● **Please help this great work for the Nation's Children** by sending a Christmas gift to Wm. J. Elliott, O.B.E., Director, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

N·S·P·C·C

PRESIDENT: H.R.H. THE DUKE OF KENT.

Western Canada Calling

It is impossible to exaggerate the immensity of the disaster which has overtaken large parts of Southern Alberta, Southern Saskatchewan and parts of Manitoba. Not less than 60,000 families must look to the Dominion Government for relief. In the midst of it all, the patience and hope of the people and the self-sacrifice of the mission clergy are inspiring to a degree. Without the help of friends in more prosperous circumstances, some missions must close.

If you are able to help in any way, please send your gift to The Secretary,

THE COLONIAL AND CONTINENTAL CHURCH SOCIETY

9 Serjeant's Inn, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. Housemaster. Wed., Sat.

AMBASSADORS. Yes and No. Tues. & Fri.

APOLLO. People at Sea. Mon. and Sat.

CAMBRIDGE. It's You I Want. Th., Sat.

COLISEUM. St. Moritz. Daily, 2.30.

COMEDY. Think of a Number Tues., Fri.

DRURY LANE. Crest of the Wave. Wed., Sat.

DUCHESS. Time and the Conways. W. & S.

DUKE of YORK'S. Black Limelight. W., Sat.

GARRICK. It's a Wise Child. Mon., Thurs.

GLOBE. "Robert's Wife" Wed. and Sat.

HIPPODROME. "Hide and Seek." Th. & S.

HIS MAJESTY'S. Balalaika. Wed. & Sat.

LYRIC. Victoria Regina. Wed. & Thurs.

PLAYHOUSE. Whiteoaks. Wed., Thurs., Sat

QUEEN'S. The School for Scandal. Wed. & Sat.

ROYALTY. I Have Been Here Before. Th., S.

ST. JAMES'S. The Silent Knight. Thur. & Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. Autumn. Tues., Fri.

SHAFTBRY. Thank You, Mr. Pepys W., S

STRAND. A Spot of Bother. Thurs. & Sat.

VICT. PAL. Busman's Honeymoon. W., S.

WYNDHAM'S. George & Margaret. W., S.

WYNDHAMS. Thursday, Dec., 9th, at 2.30.
"The Wooing of Anne Hathaway."

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Over 450 Perfs. Tem. 6404
8.30. Mats., WED. and SAT., at 2.30.
HOUSEMASTER
A Farcical Comedy by IAN HAY.

AMBASSADORS. Tem. Bar 1171.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
YES AND NO
by Kenneth Horne.

APOLLO. (Ger. 2663). Evgs. 8.30. Mon, Sat. 2.30.
ALEC L. REA presents
PEOPLE AT SEA
by J. B. PRIESTLEY

CAMBRIDGE. (Tem. 6056). 8.30. Thur., Sat., 2.30.
Extra Matinees, Dec. 27 and 28
SEYMOUR HICKS in
IT'S YOU I WANT

COLISEUM, Charing X. Tem. 3161 (7 lines).
2.30 and 8.15 DAILY
ST. MORITZ
A NOVEL REAL ICE MUSICAL SPECTACLE.

COMEDY. Whi. 2578. Evenings 8.30.
Matinees, Tuesday, Friday, 2.30.
DOUGLAS BYNG, WINIFRED SHOTTER in
THINK OF A NUMBER

DRURY LANE. 8.15. Mats. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON,
MARIE LOHR in
CREST OF THE WAVE.

DUCHESS, (Tem. 8243). 8.30. Wed. and Sat., 2.30.
No Perf. Xmas Eve. Extra Mat. Boxing Day. 2.30.
JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON in J. B. Priestley's
TIME AND THE CONWAYS

DUKE OF YORK'S. Temple Bar 5122. Evgs., 8.30
Matinees, Wed., Sat. and Boxing Day, 2.30.
MARGARET RAWLINGS in
BLACK LIMELIGHT

GARRICK. (Tem. 4601).
Evgs. 8.30. Mats., Mon., Thurs., at 2.30.
IT'S A WISE CHILD
A Comedy.

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. Evenings 8.30 Sharp.
Mats., Wed. and Sat., 2.30 Sharp.
ROBERT'S WIFE
By ST. JOHN ERVINE.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. Evgs., 8.15.
Mats., Thurs. and Sats., at 2.30.
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